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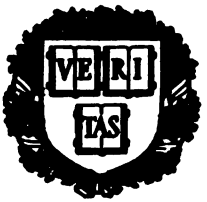

FROM THE BEQUEST OF
JAMES WALKER
(Class of 1814)
President of Harvard College

"Preference being given to works in the Intellectual and Moral Sciences"

THE WORKS OF

RICHARD BENTLEY, D.D.

COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

VOL. III.

THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS.

LONDON:
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SERMONS

PREACHED AT BOYLE'S LECTURE;

REMARKS UPON

A DISCOURSE OF FREE-THINKING;

PROPOSALS FOR AN

EDITION OF THE GREEK TESTAMENT;

ETC. ETC.

BY RICHARD BENTLEY, D. D.

EDITED, WITH NOTES,

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

LONDON:
FRANCIS MACPHERSON,
MIDDLE ROW, HOLBORN.
1838.

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THE

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

In reprinting the pieces which constitute the present volume, I have adopted the text of the following editions:

I. *Eight Sermons Preach'd at the Honourable Robert Boyle's Lecture, in the First Year* MDCXCII. *By Richard Bentley, M.A. The Sixth Edition. To which are added, Three Sermons: One at the Public Commencement, July* 5, 1696. *when he proceeded Doctor in Divinity; another before the University, Nov.* 5, 1715. *and one before his late Majesty King George I. Feb.* 3, 17$\frac{1}{1}\frac{8}{7}$. Cambridge, MDCCXXXV. 8vo.

The Boyle Lectures were originally put forth each as a distinct publication, the first six in 1692, the last two in 1693, London, 4to: and during the latter year a general title-page was prefixed to them —*The Folly and Unreasonableness of Atheism demonstrated from The Advantage and Pleasure of a Religious Life, The Faculties of Human Souls, The Structure of Animate Bodies, and The Origin and Frame of the*

World, &c. In the fourth ed. London, 1699, 4to, the author made various important corrections and alterations.

Before sending to press the seventh and eighth of these Lectures, Bentley addressed several letters to Sir Isaac (then Mr.) Newton, respecting the use to which he had there turned the discoveries of that great philosopher. The answers of Newton, first published by Richard Cumberland, *Four Letters from Sir Isaac Newton to Doctor Bentley. Containing Some Arguments in Proof of a Deity,* London, 1756, 8vo, are now appended to the Lectures.

Of the three Sermons on different subjects the original editions are: *Of Revelation and the Messias. A Sermon Preached at the Publick Commencement at Cambridge. July 5th,* 1696. London, 1696, 4to. *A Sermon upon Popery: Preach'd before the University of Cambridge, November* v^th^, MDCCXV. Cambridge, 1715, 8vo. *A Sermon Preach'd before His Majesty King George, at his Royal Chapel of St. James's, on Sunday, February* 3, 17$\frac{14}{17}$. *Publish'd by His Majesty's Special Command.* London, 1717, 8vo.

II. *A Speech by Dr. Bentley, Archdeacon of Ely, to the Clergy of that Diocese, at his Visitation held in Cambridge, December* 13, 1716. In *The St. James's Evening Post, (Numb.* 246.) *From Thursday, December* 20, *to Saturday, December* 22, 1716.

III. *Remarks upon a Late Discourse of Free-thinking: in a Letter to F. H., D.D. By Philelentherus Lipsiensis.*

Est genus hominum, qui esse primos se omnium
rerum volunt,
Nec sunt ———————
——————— *An audes*
Personam formare novam? Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.

The eighth edition. With further Additions from the Author's MS. (*Part the Second. The eighth edition.* —*Part the Third. The second edition.*) Cambridge, 1743, 8vo.

The First and Second Parts came forth separately in 1713, 8vo. In an "Advertisement" to ed. 1743, (see p. 473 of the present vol.) we are told, that two half-sheets of the Third Part were first added to the seventh edition of the two former Parts, 1737. In some copies of the fourth edition of the Second Part, 1714, those two half-sheets are found, the addition probably having been made in 1737. A few pages more of the Third Part originally appeared in the ed. of 1743.

IV. *Dr. Bentley's Proposals for Printing a New Edition of the Greek Testament, and St. Hierom's Latin Version. With a full Answer to all the Re-*

marks of a late Pamphleteer. By a Member of Trinity College in Cambridge.

Cunarum labor est Angues superare mearum. *Ovid.*
Tollentemque minas & sibila colla tumentem
Dejice. *Virgil.*

London, 1721, 4to.

Two editions of the *Proposals*, each consisting of two leaves in folio, had previously appeared in 1720.

V. *Richardi Bentleii, cum septem in Theologia Doctores crearet, Oratiuncula; Cantabrigiæ in Comitiis habita, Julii* vi. MDCCXXV. Prefixed by Bentley to his editions of Terence, Cantab. 1726, Amstel. 1727, 4to.

The present volume comprehends all the published theological writings of Bentley. The Boyle Lectures which he delivered during the year 1694, a defence of Christianity against the objections of infidels, were unfortunately never committed to the press (see Monk's *Life of B.* vol. i. p. 56); and though copies are mentioned as extant by Kippis in his ed. of the *Biog. Brit.* (vol. ii. p. 243, 1780), no traces of them are now to be discovered: the late Dean Vincent, (as I am informed by the truly learned Mr. Kidd,) was of opinion that they have been irre-

trievably lost. Concerning another unprinted piece by Bentley, a Prælection on the disputed verse of St. John, see p. 485.

It may be necessary to apprise some readers that *La Friponnerie Laïque des Prétendus Esprits-Forts d'Angleterre,* which has furnished me with a considerable number of notes for the *Remarks upon a Late Discourse of Free-thinking,* is a French translation of that work, by Armand de la Chapelle, published at Amsterdam in 1738.

ALEXANDER DYCE.

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EIGHT SERMONS

PREACHED AT THE

HON. ROBERT BOYLE'S LECTURE,

IN THE YEAR MDCXCII.

(From ed. 1735.)

TO

MY MOST HONOURED PATRONS, TRUSTEES,

APPOINTED BY THE WILL OF THE

HONOURABLE ROBERT BOYLE, ESQ.,

THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

THOMAS,

LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN,*

SIR HENRY ASHURST, KT. AND BARONET,

SIR JOHN ROTHERAM, SERJEANT AT LAW,

JOHN EVELYN, SENIOR, ESQUIRE.

MOST HONOURED,

GOD having disposed the heart of that incomparable person, the Honourable ROBERT BOYLE, Esquire, lately deceased, the glory of our nation and age, whose charity and goodness were as universal as his learning and fame; 'To settle an annual salary for some divine or preaching minister, who shall be enjoined to perform the offices following: 1. To preach eight Sermons in the year, for proving the Christian religion against notorious infidels, viz. Atheists, Deists, Pagans, Jews, and Mahometans; not descending to any controversies that are among Christians themselves: the† lectures to be on the first Monday of the respective months of January, February, March, April, May, September, October, November; in such church as the trustees shall from time to time appoint: 2. To be assisting to all companies and encouraging them in any undertaking for propagating the Christian religion: 3. To be ready to satisfy such real scruples as any may have concerning those matters; and to answer

[* Dr. Thomas Tenison.—D.]

[† *the*; 1st ed. "these."—D.]

such new objections or difficulties as may be started, to which good answers have not yet been made? You have been pleased to believe me able in some measure to perform these offices, and to command this first essay to be made public. I am very sensible of the great honour, as well as the great extent and difficulty of the task; and shall endeavour, to the utmost of my poor ability, to answer the religious and generous design of that excellent person, and the good opinion you have entertained of,

My most honoured Patrons,

Your very obliged and humble servant,

R. BENTLEY.

March 17, 1692.*

[* Not in 1st ed.—D.]

THE FOLLY OF ATHEISM,

AND (WHAT IS NOW CALLED)

DEISM,

EVEN WITH RESPECT TO

THE PRESENT LIFE.

SERMON I.

Preached March the 7th, 169½.

PSALM xiv. verse 1.

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

I SHALL not now make any inquiry about the time and occasion and other circumstances of composing this Psalm; nor how it comes to pass, that, with very little variation, we have it twice over, both here the 14th, and again number the 53d. Not that these and such like are not important considerations in themselves; but that I think them improper now, when we are to argue and expostulate with such persons as allow no divine authority to our text, and profess no greater, or, it may be they will say, less veneration for these sacred hymns, than for the profane songs of Anacreon or Horace. So that although I myself do really believe, that all such as *say in their hearts, There is no God,* are *foolish* and *corrupt,* both in understanding and will, because I see*

[* see; 1*st ed.* "see that."—D.]

Infinite Wisdom itself* has pronounced them to be so; nevertheless this argument would at present have no force upon these men, till in due time and method we have evinced the sufficient authority of holy Scripture. But, however, there are other books extant, which they must needs allow of as proper evidence; even the mighty volumes of visible nature, and the everlasting tables of right reason; wherein, if they do not wilfully shut their eyes, they may read their own folly written by the finger of God, in a much plainer and more terrible sentence than Belshazzar's[a] was by the hand upon the wall.

And as the impious principles of these persons do preclude any argumentation from the revealed word of God, so they prevent us also from speaking at present to the second part of the text. The whole verse hath apparently two propositions: the one denoting the *folly* of *Atheism; The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God:* the second declaring the *corruption* and flagitiousness of life which† naturally attend it; *they are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.* Now, this latter part to a genuine Atheist is mere *jargon,* as he loves‡ to call it; an empty sound of words without any signification. He allows no natural morality, nor any other distinction of good and evil, just and unjust, than as human institution and the modes and fashions of various countries denominate§ them. The most heroical actions or detestable villanies are in the nature of|| things indifferent to his approbation, if by secrecy they are alike concealed from rewards or punishments, from ignominy or applause. So that, till we have proved, in its proper place, the eternal and essential difference between virtue and vice, we must forbear to urge Atheists with the *corruption* and *abominableness* of their principles. But I presume the first part of the text, the *folly and sottishness*

[* itself; 1*st ed.* "himself."—D.] [a Dan. v. 5.
[† which; 1*st ed.* "that."—D.] [‡ he loves; 1*st ed.* "they love."—D.]
[§ denominate; 1*st ed.* "do denominate."—D.]
[|| of; 1*st ed.* "of the."—D.]

of Atheism (which shall be the subject of this discourse) will be allowed to come home to their case, since they make such a noisy pretence to wit and sagacity; and I believe several of them first engage in that labyrinth of nonsense and folly, out of an absurd and preposterous affectation of seeming wiser than their neighbours.

But, before I proceed any farther, it will be necessary to clear and vindicate this expression of the Psalmist, *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.* For I know not any interpreters that will allow it to be spoken of such as *flatly deny* the being of God; but of them that, believing his existence, do yet seclude him from directing the affairs of the world, from observing and judging the actions of men. I suppose they might be induced to this from the commonly received notion of an innate idea of God, imprinted upon every soul of man at their creation, in characters that can never be defaced. Whence it will follow, that speculative Atheism does only subsist* in *our* speculation; whereas really human nature cannot be guilty of the crime: that, indeed, a few sensual and voluptuous persons may for a season eclipse this native light of the soul; but can never so wholly smother and extinguish it, but that at some lucid intervals it will recover itself again, and shine forth to the conviction of their consciences.† And therefore they believed, that the words would not admit of a strict and rigorous interpretation; but ought to be so tempered and accommodated to the nature of things, as that they may describe those profane persons, who, though they *do not, nor can,*‡ really doubt *in their hearts* of the *being* of God, yet§ openly deny his *providence* in the course of their lives. Now, if this be all that is meant by the *text,* I do not see how we can defend, not only the fitness and propriety, but the very truth of the expression. As to that natural and indelible signature of God, which human souls in their first origin are supposed to be

[* does only subsist; 1*st ed.* "doth subsist only."—D.]
[† consciences; 1*st ed.* "conscience."—D.]
[‡ *can*; 1*st ed.* "*cannot.*"—D.] [§ yet; 1*st ed.* "yet do."—D.]

stamped with, I shall shew, at a fitter opportunity, that it is a mistake, and that we have no need of it in our disputes against Atheism. So that, being free from that prejudice, I interpret the words of the text in the literal acceptation, which will likewise take in the expositions of others. For I believe that the royal Psalmist in this comprehensive brevity of speech, *There is no God*, hath concluded all the various forms of impiety; whether such* as excludes the Deity from governing the world by his providence, or judging it by his righteousness, or creating it by his wisdom and power; because the consequence and result of *all* these opinions is terminated in downright Atheism. For the divine inspection into the affairs of the world doth necessarily follow from the nature and being of God. And he that denies this doth implicitly deny his existence: he may acknowledge what he will with his mouth, but *in his heart he hath said, There is no God. A God, therefore a Providence,* was a general argument of virtuous men, and not peculiar to the Stoics alone. And again, *No Providence, therefore no God,* was the most plausible reason, and the most frequent in the mouths of atheistical men. So that it seems to be agreed on all hands, that the existence of God and his government of the world do mutually suppose and imply one another.

There are some infidels among us that not only disbelieve the *Christian* religion, but oppose the assertions of† *Providence,* of the *immortality* of the soul, of an universal *judgment* to come, and of any *incorporeal* essence; and yet, to avoid the odious name of *Atheists,* would shelter and screen themselves under a new one of *Deists,* which is not quite so obnoxious. But I think the *text* hath cut them short, and precluded this subterfuge; inasmuch as it hath declared, that all such wicked principles are coincident and all one in the issue with the rankest Atheism: *The fool,* that doth exempt the affairs of the world from the ordination and disposal of God, *hath said in his heart, There is no God* at all. It was

[* such; 1*st ed.* "of such."—D.]

[† oppose the assertions of; 1*st ed.* "impugn the assertion of a."—D.]

the opinion of many of the ancients, that Epicurus[b] introduced a *Deity* into his philosophy, not because he was persuaded of his existence, (for, when he had brought him upon the stage of nature, he made him only *muta persona*, and interdicted him from bearing any part in it,) but purely that he might not incur the offence of the magistrate. He was generally, therefore, suspected* *verbis reliquisse Deum, re sustulisse;* to have framed on purpose such a contemptible paltry hypothesis about him, as indeed left the name and title of God in the world, but nothing of his nature and power. Just as a philosopher[c] of our own age gave a ludicrous and fictitious notion about the *rest of the earth*, to evade the hard censure and usage which Galileo had lately met with. For my own part, as I do not exclude this reason from being a grand occasion of Epicurus's owning a God,† so I believe that he and Democritus too were compelled to it likewise by the necessity of their own systems. For seeing they explained the phenomena of *vision, imagination*, and *thought* itself, by certain thin fleeces of atoms, that flow incessantly from the surfaces of bodies, and by their subtilty and fineness penetrate‡ any obstacle, and yet retain the exact figures and lineaments of the several bodies from which they proceed; and in this manner insinuating themselves through the pores of human bodies into the§ contexture of the soul, do there excite‖ sensation and perception of themselves: in consequence of¶ this hypothesis they were obliged to maintain, that we could have no fancy, or idea,** or conception of any thing, but what did really subsist either entire or in its several parts. Whence it followed, that mankind

[b] Posidon. apud Ciceron. Plutarch. &c.

[* magistrate. He was generally, therefore, suspected; 1*st ed.* "government. Wherefore he was generally suspected."—D.]

[c] Mr. Des Cartes. [† owning a God; 1*st ed.* "Deism."—D.]

[‡ penetrate; 1*st ed.* "do penetrate."—D.]

[§ through the pores of human bodies into the; 1*st ed.* "into the eyes and the."—D.]

[‖ there excite; 1*st ed.* "there produce and excite."—D.]

[¶ of; 1*st ed.* "therefore of."—D.]

[** fancy, or idea; 1*st ed.* "phantasie, idea."—D.]

could have no imaginations* of Jupiter or Mars, of Minerva or Isis, if there were not actually such beings in nature to emit those effluvia, which, gliding into the soul, must beget such imaginations.† And thence it was, that those philosophers adapted their description of the Deity to the vulgar apprehensions of those times; gods and goddesses innumerable, and all of human figure, because otherwise the conceptions of mankind about them could not possibly be accounted for by‡ their physiology. So that if Epicurus and Democritus were in earnest about their philosophy, they did necessarily and really believe the *existence of the gods*. But then, as§ to the nature and authority of them, they bereaved that Jupiter of his thunder and majesty; forbidding him to look or peep abroad, so much as to inquire what news in the infinite space about him; but to content himself and be happy with an eternal laziness and dozing, unless some rambling troops of *atoms*, upon the dissolution of a neighbouring world, might chance to awake him. ‖ Now, because no Israelite in the days of the Psalmist is likely to have been so curious about natural knowledge, as to believe the being of a God|| for such a quaint and airy reason as this, when he had once boldly denied his dominion over the world; and since¶ there is not now one infidel living so ridiculous as to pretend to solve the phenomena of *sight*, *fancy*, or *cogitation*, by those fleeting superficial films of bodies; I must beg leave to think, both that** the *fool in the text* was a thorough confirmed *Atheist*, and that the modern disguised *Deists* do only call themselves so for the former reason of Epicurus, to decline the public odium and resentment of the magistrate, and that they cover†† the most arrant Atheism under the mask and shadow of a Deity; by which they understand no

[* imaginations; 1*st ed.* "imagination."—D.]
[† imaginations; 1*st ed.* "an imagination."—D.]
[‡ by; 1*st ed.* "from."—D.] [§ But then, as; 1*st ed.* "But as."—D.]
[‖ of a God; 1*st ed.* "of God."—D.]
[¶ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]
[** think, both that; 1*st ed.* "think that."—D.]
[†† and that they cover; 1*st ed.* "and do cover."—D.]

more than some eternal inanimate matter, some universal nature, and soul of the world, void of all sense and cogitation, so far from being endowed* with infinite wisdom and goodness. And therefore, in this present discourse, they may deservedly come under that character which the text hath given of them, of *fools, that have said in their hearts, There is no God.*

And now, having thus far cleared our way, in the next place we shall offer some notorious proofs of the gross *folly* and stupidity of Atheists.

If a person that had a fair estate in reversion, which in all probability he would speedily be possessed of, and of which he might reasonably promise to himself a long and happy enjoyment, should be assured by some skilful physician, that in a very short time he would inevitably fall into a disease which† would so totally deprive him of his understanding and memory, that he should lose the knowledge of all things without him, nay, all consciousness and sense of his own person and being: if, I say, upon a certain belief of this indication, the man should appear overjoyed at the news, and be mightily transported with the discovery and expectation, would not all that saw him be astonished at such behaviour? would they not be forward to conclude, that the distemper had seized him already, and even‡ then the miserable creature was become a mere *fool* and an idiot? Now, the carriage of our *Atheists* or *Deists* is infinitely more amazing than this; no dotage so infatuate, no frenzy so extravagant as theirs. They have been educated in a *religion* that instructed them in the knowledge of a *supreme Being;* a Spirit most excellently glorious, superlatively powerful, and wise, and good, Creator of all things out of nothing; that hath endued the sons of men, his peculiar favourites,

[* so far from being endowed; 1*st ed.* "endued with none at all, much less."—D.]

[† which; 1*st ed.* "that."—D.]

[‡ and even; 1*st ed.* "and that even."—D.]

with a rational spirit, and hath placed them as spectators in this noble theatre of the world, to view and applaud these glorious scenes of earth and heaven, the workmanship of his hands; that hath furnished them in general with a sufficient store of all things, either necessary or convenient for life; and, particularly to such as fear and obey him, hath promised a supply of all wants, a deliverance and protection from all dangers:* *that they that seek him shall want no manner of thing that is good.*[d] Who,† besides his munificence to them in this life, *hath so*‡ *loved the world, that he sent his only-begotten Son,*[e] the express image of his substance, and partaker of his eternal nature and glory, to *bring life and immortality to light,*[f] and to tender them to mankind upon fair and gracious terms; that if they submit§ to his *easy yoke and light burden,*[g] and observe‖ his commandments, *which are not grievous,*[h] he then gives¶ them *the promise of eternal salvation;* he hath** *reserved for them in heaven an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away;*[i] he hath†† *prepared* for them an unspeakable, unconceivable perfection of joy and bliss, *things that eye hath*‡‡ *not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man.*[k] What a delightful and ravishing hypothesis of religion is§§ this! And in this religion they have had their education. Now let us suppose some great professor in Atheism to suggest to some of these men, that‖‖ all this is mere¶¶ dream and imposture; that there is no such excellent Being, as they suppose, that created and preserves them; that all about them is dark senseless matter, driven

[* from all dangers; 1*st ed.* "from dangers."—D.]
[† Who; 1*st ed.* "And."—D.]
[‡ *hath so*; 1*st ed.* "he *so*."—D.]
[§ submit; 1*st ed.* "submitted."—D.]
[‖ observe; 1*st ed.* "observed."—D.]
[¶ gives; 1*st ed.* "gave."—D.]
[** hath; 1*st ed.* "had."—D.]
[†† hath; 1*st ed.* "had."—D.]
[‡‡ *hath*; 1*st ed.* "*had*."—D.]
[§§ is; *so* 1*st ed.*; *ed.* 1735, "in."—D.]
[‖‖ these men, that; 1*st ed.* "these, that."—D.]
[¶¶ mere; 1*st ed.* "a mere."—D.]

[d] Ps. xxxiv. 9 [10].
[e] John, iii. 16.
[f] 2 Tim. i. 10.
[g] Matt. xi. 30.
[h] 1 John, v. 3.
[i] Heb. v. 9. 1 Pet. i. 4.
[k] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

on by the blind impulses of fatality and fortune; that men first sprung up, like mushrooms, out of the mud and slime of the earth; and that all their thoughts, and the whole of what they call soul, are only various action and repercussion of small particles of matter, kept awhile a-moving by some mechanism and clock-work, which finally must cease and perish* by death. If it be true, then, (as we daily find it is,) that men† listen with complacency to these horrid suggestions; if they let go their hope of everlasting life with willingness and joy; if they entertain the thoughts of final perdition with exultation and triumph; ought they not to be esteemed most notorious *fools*,[l] even destitute of common sense, and abandoned to a callousness and numbness of soul?

What then, is heaven itself, with its *pleasures for evermore*, to be parted with so unconcernedly? Is a *crown of righteousness*, a *crown of life*,[m] to be surrendered with laughter? Is an *exceeding and eternal weight of glory*[n] too light in the balance against the hopeless death of the Atheist, and utter extinction? 'Twas a noble saying of the Emperor Marcus, That he would not endure to live one day in the world, if he did not believe it to be under the government of Providence. Let us but imagine that excellent person confuted and satisfied by some Epicurean of his time, that all was but *atoms*, and *vacuum*, and *necessity*, and *chance*: would he have been so pleased and delighted with the conviction? would he have so triumphed in being overcome? Or rather, as he hath told us, would he not have gone down with sorrow and despair to the grave? Did I but once see an Atheist lament and bewail himself, that, upon a strict and impartial examination, he had found, to his cost, that all was a mistake; that the prerogative of human nature was

[* must cease and perish; 1*st ed.* "ceases and perishes."—D.]

[† men; 1*st ed.* "they."—D.]

[l] Ἄθεον καὶ ἄλογον καὶ ἀναίσθητον γένος. Max. Tyr. Diss. 1. [= *Diss.* xvii. ed. Markl. ἄθεον, . . . καὶ ἀναισθὲς γένος . . . ἄλογον, κ. τ. λ.—D.]

[m] 2 Tim. iv. 8. Jam. i. 12. [n] 2 Cor. iv. 17.

vanished and gone; those glorious hopes of immortality and bliss, nothing but cheating joys and pleasant delusions; that he had undone himself by losing the comfortable error, and would give all the world to have better arguments for religion: there would be great hopes of prevailing upon such an Atheist as this. But, alas! there are none of them of this temper of mind; there are none that *understand and seek after God*;[o] they have *no knowledge*, nor any desire of it;* they *thrust the word of God from them, and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life*;[p] they willingly prefer darkness before light; and obstinately choose to perish for ever in the grave, rather than be heirs of salvation in the resurrection of the just. These certainly are the *fools* in the text, indocile intractable fools, whose stolidity can baffle all arguments, and be† proof against demonstration itself; *whose end* (as the words of St. Paul do truly describe them), *whose end* and very hope *is*‡ *destruction*, an eternal deprivation of being; *whose God is their belly*, the gratification of sensual lusts; *whose glory is in their shame*, in the debasing of§ mankind to the condition of beasts; *who mind earthly things*;[q] who, if (like that great Apostle) they were *caught up to the third heaven*,[r] would (as the spies did of Canaan) *bring down an evil report*[s] of those regions of bliss. And I fear, unless it please God by extraordinary methods *to help their unbelief, and enlighten the eyes of their understanding*,[t] they will carry their Atheism with them to the pit; and the flames of hell only must convince them of their error.

This supine and inconsiderate behaviour of the Atheists is so extremely absurd, that it would be deemed incredible, if it did not occur to our daily observation; it proclaims aloud, that they are not led astray by their reasoning, but

[o] Ver. 2 and 4 of this Psalm.
[p] Acts, xiii. 46.
[q] Phil. iii. 19.
[r] 2 Cor. xii. 2.
[s] Numb. xiii. 32.
[t] Mar. ix. 24. Eph. i. 19 [18].

[* it; 1st ed. "instruction."—D.]
[† be; 1st ed. "is."—D.]
[‡ *end* and very hope *is*; 1st ed. "*end is*."—D.]
[§ debasing of; 1st ed. "debasing and villanizing of."—D.]

led captive by their lusts to the denial of God. When the very pleasures of paradise are contemned and trampled on, like pearls cast before swine, there's small hope of reclaiming them by arguments of reason. But however, as Solomon adviseth, we will answer these *fools not according to their folly, lest we also be like unto them.*[u] It is expedient that we *put to silence the ignorance of these foolish men,* that believers may be the more confirmed and more resolute in the faith.

Did religion bestow heaven without any terms or conditions indifferently upon all; if the *crown of life* was hereditary, and free to good and bad; and not settled by covenant upon the elect of God only, such as *live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present world;*[v] I believe there would be no such thing as an infidel among us. And, without controversy, 'tis the way and means of attaining to heaven, that makes profane scorners so willingly let go the expectation of it. 'Tis not the articles of the creed, but the duty to God and their neighbour, that is such an inconsistent incredible legend. They will not practise the rules of religion, and therefore they cannot believe the promises and rewards of it.

But, however, let us suppose them to have acted like rational and serious men; and, perhaps, upon a diligent inquisition, they have found, that the hope of immortality deserves to be *joyfully* quitted, and that either out of *interest* or *necessity.**

I. And first, one may conceive, indeed, how there might possibly be a *necessity* of quitting it. It might be tied to such terms as would render it impossible ever to be obtained. For example; if it should be required of all the candidates of glory and immortality, to give a full and knowing assent to such things as are repugnant to common sense, as contradict the κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι, the universal notions and indubitable maxims of reason; if they were to believe, that one and the

[u] Prov. xxvi. 4. [v] Tit. ii. 12.

[* *necessity*; 1st ed. "*necessity*, which is both."—D.]

same thing may *be* and *not be* at the same time and in the same respect; if, allowing the received ideas and denominations of numbers, and figures, and body, they must seriously affirm, that two and two do make a dozen, or that the diameter of a circle is as long as the circumference, or that *the same body may be all of it in distant places at once:* I must confess, that the offers of happiness, upon such articles of belief as these, would be mere tantalising of rational creatures; and the kingdom of heaven would become the inheritance of only idiots and fools. For, whilst a man of common capacity doth think and reflect upon such propositions, he cannot possibly bribe his understanding to give a verdict for their truth. So that he would be quite frustrated of the hope of reward, upon such unpracticable conditions as these; neither could he have any evidence of the reality of the promise, superior to what he is conscious to of the falsity of the means. Now, if any Atheist can shew me, in the system of Christian religion, any such absurdities and repugnancies to our natural faculties, I will either evince them to be interpolations and corruptions of the faith, or yield myself a captive and a proselyte to his infidelity.

II. Or, 2dly, they may think 'tis the *interest* of mankind that there should be no heaven at all, because the labour to acquire it is more worth than the purchase; God Almighty (if there be one) having much overvalued the blessings of his presence. So that, upon a fair estimation, 'tis a greater advantage to take one's swing in sensuality, and have a glut of voluptuousness in this life, freely resigning all pretences to future happiness; which, when a man is once extinguished by death, he cannot be supposed either to want or desire; than to be tied up by commandments and rules so contrary* to flesh and blood; to *take up one's cross, to deny himself,*[w] and refuse the satisfaction of natural desires. This, indeed, is the true language of Atheism, and the cause of it too. Were not this at the bottom, no man in his wits could con-

[* so contrary; 1*st ed.* "so thwart and contrary."—D.]

[w] Mark, viii. 34.

temn and ridicule the expectation of immortality. Now, what power or influence can religion have upon the minds of these men, while not only their affections and lusts, but their supposed interest shall plead against it? But, if we can once silence this powerful advocate, we shall without much difficulty carry the cause at the bar of impartial reason.

Now, here is a notorious instance of the *folly* of Atheists, that while they repudiate all title to the kingdom of heaven, merely for the present pleasure of body, and their boasted tranquillity of mind, besides the extreme madness in running such a desperate hazard after death (which I will not now treat of), they* deprive themselves here of that very pleasure and tranquillity they seek for. For I shall now endeavour to shew, that religion itself gives us the greatest delights and advantages even in this life also, though there should prove in the event to be no resurrection to another. *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*[x]

But, before I begin that, I must occur to one specious objection both against this proposition and the past part of my discourse; namely, that religion doth perpetually haunt and disquiet us with dismal apprehensions of everlasting burnings in hell; and that there is no shelter or† refuge from those fears, but behind the principles of Atheism.

(1.) First, therefore, I will freely acknowledge to the Atheists, that some part of what hath been said is not directly conclusive against them, if they say that, before they revolted from the faith, they had sinned away all expectation of ever arriving at heaven; and, consequently, had good reason so *joyfully* to receive the news of annihilation by death, as an advantageous change for the everlasting torments of the damned. But, because I cannot expect that they will make such a shameless and senseless confession, and supply us with that invincible argument against themselves, I must say again, that to prefer final extinction before a happy immortality does declare the most deplorable stu-

[* they; 1*st ed.* "they unwittingly."—D.]

[x] Prov. iii. 17.

[† or; 1*st ed.* "nor."—D.]

pidity of mind. Nay, although they should confess that they believed themselves to be reprobates before they disbelieved religion, and took Atheism as a sanctuary and refuge from the terrors of hell; yet still the imputation of *folly* will stick upon them, inasmuch as they chose Atheism as an opiate to still those frightening apprehensions, by inducing a dulness and lethargy of mind, rather than they would* make use of that active and salutary medicine, a hearty repentance; that they did not know the *richness of the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of God*;[y] and that a sincere amendment of life was never too late,† *Jesus Christ being the Saviour of all men,* and a *propitiation for the sins of the whole world; who came into the world to save sinners, even the chief of them all; and died for the ungodly, and his bitterest enemies.*[z]

(2.) And, secondly, as to the *fears of damnation:* those terrors are not to be charged upon religion itself, which proceed either from the want of religion, or superstitious mistakes about it. For as an honest and innocent man doth know the punishments which the laws of his country denounce against felons, and murderers, and traitors, without being terrified or concerned at them; so a Christian, in truth as well as in name, though he believe the consuming vengeance prepared for the disobedient and unbelievers, is not at all dismayed at the apprehensions of it. Indeed, it adds spurs and gives wings to his diligence; it excites him to *work out his salvation with fear and trembling*;[a] a religious and ingenuous fear, that is tempered with hope, and with love, and unspeakable joy. But he knows that, if he fears Him who is *able to destroy both soul and body in hell*,[b] he needs not fear that his own soul or body shall ever go thither.

I allow, that some debauched and profligate wretches, or

[* they would; 1*st ed.* "to."—D.]
[† too late; 1*st ed.* "too late nor in vain."—D.]
[z] 1 Tim. iv. 10. 1 John, v. 14 [ii. 2]. 1 Tim. i. 15. Rom. v. 6, 10.
[a] Phil. ii. 12.
[y] Rom. ii. 4.
[b] Matth. x. 28.

some designing perfidious hypocrites, that are religious in outward profession, but *corrupt and abominable* in their works, are most justly as well as usually liable to these horrors of mind. 'Tis not my business to defend or excuse such as these; I must leave them, as long as they keep their *hardness and impenitent hearts*, to those gnawing and excruciating fears, those whips of the divine *Nemesis*, that frequently scourge even Atheists themselves. For the Atheists* also can never wholly extinguish those† horrible forebodings of conscience. They endeavour, indeed, to compose and charm their fears, but‡ a thousand occasions daily awaken§ the sleeping tormentors. Any slight consideration either of themselves, or of any thing without; whatsoever they think on, or whatsoever they look on; all‖ administer some reasons for suspicion and diffidence, lest possibly they may be in the wrong; and then 'tis a *fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*[c] *There are they in great fear*, as 'tis in the fifth verse of this Psalm, under terrible presages of *judgment and fiery indignation.*[d] Neither can they say, that these terrors, like tales about spectres, may disturb some small pretenders and puny novices, but dare not approach the *vere adepti*, the masters and rabbies of Atheism: for 'tis well known,[e] both from ancient and modern experience, that the very boldest of them, out of their debauches and company, when they chance to be surprised with solitude or sickness, are the most suspicious, and timorous, and despondent wretches in the world: and that the boasted happy Atheist in the indolence of body, and an undisturbed calm and serenity of mind, is altogether as rare a creature as the *vir sapiens* was among the Stoics; whom they often met with in idea and description, in harangues and in books,

[* the Atheists; 1*st ed.* "they."—D.]

[† those; 1*st ed.* "these."—D.]

[‡ They endeavour, indeed, to compose and charm their fears, but; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[§ daily awaken; 1*st ed.* "do awake."—D.]

[‖ all; 1*st ed.* "all do."—D.]

[c] Heb. x. 31.

[d] Heb. x. 27.

[e] Cic., Plutarch, &c.

but freely owned that he never had or was like to exist actually in nature.

And now, as to the present advantages which we owe to *religion*, they are very conspicuous; whether we consider mankind, first, *separately*; or secondly, under *society* and *government*.

1. And first, in a *single capacity*. How is a good Christian animated and cheered by a stedfast belief of the promises of the Gospel; of an everlasting enjoyment of perfect felicity, such as after millions of millions of ages is still youthful, and flourishing, and inviting as at the first! no wrinkles in the face, no grey hairs on the head of eternity; no end, no diminution, no satiety of those delights. What a warm and vigorous influence does a religious heart feel from a firm expectation of these glories! Certainly this hope alone is of inestimable value; 'tis a kind of anticipation and pledge of those joys; and at least gives him one heaven upon earth, though the other should prove a delusion. Now, what are the mighty promises of Atheism in competition with these?* let us know the glorious recompenses it proposes.† Utter extinction and cessation of being; to be reduced to the same condition as if we never had been born. O dismal reward of infidelity! at which nature does shrink and shiver with horror. What some of the learnedest doctors[f] among the Jews have esteemed the most dreadful of all punishments,‡ and have assigned for the portion of the blackest criminals of the damned; so interpreting *Tophet, Abaddon, the Vale of Slaughter*, and the like, for final excision and deprivation of being; this Atheism exhibits to us as an equivalent to heaven. 'Tis well known§ what hath been disputed among schoolmen to this effect. And 'tis an observation of Plutarch,[g] that the generality of mankind, *πάν-*

[* in competition with these; *not in 1st ed.*—D.]

[† proposes; *1st ed.* "proposeth."—D.]

[f] Vide Pocockii Notas ad Portam Mosis, p. 158, &c.

[‡ punishments; *1st ed.* "punishment."—D.]

[§ 'Tis well known; *1st ed.* "We all know."—D.]

[g] Plutarch, Ὅτι οὐδὲ ζῆν, &c. p. 1104, 1105. edit. Ruald. [= *Mor.* t. v. p. 339. ed. Wyttenb.—D.]

τες καὶ πᾶσαι, as well women as men, chose rather to endure all the punishments of hell, as described by the poets, than part with the hope of immortality, though immortal only in misery. I easily grant, that this would be a very hard bargain; and that *not to be at all*, is more eligible than *to be miserable always*; our Saviour himself having determined the question: *Woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.*[h] But, however, thus much it evidently shews, that this desire of immortality* is a natural affection of the soul; 'tis *self-preservation* in the highest and truest meaning; 'tis interwoven in the very frame and constitution of man. How, then, can the Atheist reflect on his own hypothesis without extreme sorrow and dejection of spirit? Will he say, that, when once he is dead, this desire will be nothing; and that he that is not cannot lament his annihilation? So, indeed, it would be hereafter, according† to his principles. But nevertheless, for the present, while‡ he continues in life (which we now speak of), that§ dusky scene of horror, that‖ melancholy prospect of final perdition, will frequently occur to his fancy; the sweetest enjoyments of life will often become flat and insipid, will be damped and extinguished, be bittered and poisoned, by the malignant and venomous quality of this opinion.

Is it not more comfortable to a man to think well of himself, to have a high value and conceit of the dignity of his nature, to believe a noble origination of his race, the offspring and image of the great King of Glory, rather than that men first proceeded, as vermin are thought to do, by the sole influence of the sun, out of dirt and putrefaction?

Is it not a firmer foundation for contentment and tranquillity, to believe that all things were at first created, and

[h] Matth. xxvi. 24.

[* immortality; 1st ed. "existence."—D.]

[† would be hereafter, according; 1st ed. "will be according."—D.]

[‡ nevertheless, for the present, while; 1st ed. "notwithstanding, while."—D.]

[§ that; 1st ed. "this."—D.]

[‖ that; 1st ed. "this."—D.]

are since continually* ordered and disposed for the best, and that principally for the benefit and pleasure of man, than that the whole universe is mere bungling and blundering; no art or contrivance to be seen in't; nothing effected for any purpose and design; but all ill-favouredly cobbled and jumbled together by the unguided agitation and rude shuffles of matter?

Can any man wish a better support under affliction, than the friendship and favour of Omnipotence, of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, that† is both able and willing, and knows how to relieve him? Such a man *can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth him*:[i] he can patiently suffer all things with cheerful submission and resignation to the Divine will. He has a secret spring of spiritual joy, and the continual feast of a good conscience within, that forbid him to be miserable. But what a forlorn, destitute creature is the Atheist in distress! He hath no friend in extremity, but poison, or a dagger, or a halter, or a precipice. A violent death is the last refuge of the Epicureans, as well as the Stoics. This, says Lucretius,[j] is the distinguishing character of a genuine son of our sect, that he will not endure to live in exile, and want, and disgrace, out of a vain fear of death; but despatch himself resolutely into the state of eternal sleep and insensibility. And yet, for all this swaggering, not one of a hundred of them hath‡ boldness enough to follow the direction. The base and degenerous saying of one of them is very well known: That *life* is always *sweet*, and he should still desire to prolong it; though, after he had been maimed and distorted by the rack, he should lastly be condemned to hang on a gibbet.[k]

And then, as to the *practical rules* and duties of religion. As the miracles of our Lord are peculiarly eminent above the

[* are since continually; 1*st ed.* "are continually."—D.]
[† that; 1*st ed.* "who."—D.] [i] Phil. iv. 13. [j] Lib. iii.
[‡ hundred of them hath; 1*st ed.* "hundred hath."—D.]
[k] Mecænas apud Senec. Ep. ci. Debilem facito manu, Debilem pede, coxa, &c.

lying wonders of demons, in that they were not made out of vain ostentation of power, and to raise unprofitable amazement, but for the real benefit and advantage of men, by feeding the hungry, healing all sorts of diseases, ejecting of devils, and reviving the dead; so likewise the commands which he hath imposed on his followers are not like the absurd ceremonies of pagan idolatry, the frivolous rites of their initiations and worship, that might look like incantation and magic, but had no tendency in their nature to make mankind the happier. Our Saviour hath enjoined us a *reasonable service*,[l] accommodated to the rational part of our nature. All his laws are in themselves, abstracted from any consideration of recompense, conducing* to the temporal interest of them that observe them. For what can be more availing to a man's health, or his credit, or estate, or security in this world, than charity and meekness, than sobriety and temperance, than honesty and diligence in his calling? Do not pride and arrogance infallibly meet with contempt? Do not contentiousness, and cruelty, and study of revenge, seldom fail of retaliation? Are not envious and covetous, discontented and anxious minds tormentors to themselves? Do not we see, that slothful, and intemperate, and incontinent persons destroy their bodies with diseases, their reputation† with disgrace, and their families with want? Are adultery and fornication forbidden only by Moses and Christ? or do not heathen lawgivers punish such enormities with fines or imprisonment, with exile or death? 'Twas an objection of Julian the Apostate,[m] that there were no new precepts of morality in our religion: *Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife:* why, all the world, says he, is agreed about these commandments; and, in every country under heaven, there are laws and penalties made to enforce all the ten, excepting only the *sab-*

[l] Rom. xii. 1. [* conducing; 1*st ed.* "conducible."—D.]
[† reputation; 1*st ed.* "reputations."—D.]
[m] Julianus apud Cyrillum, p. 134.

bath, and *the worship of strange gods*. We can answer him another way; but he may make our infidels ashamed to complain of those ordinances as hard impositions, which the sense of all nations has thought to be reasonable; which not only the philosophers of Greece and Italy, and the learned* world, but the Banians of Mogul, the Talapoins of Siam, the Mandarins of China, the moralists of Peru and Mexico, all the wisdom of mankind, have declared to be necessary duties. Nay, if the Atheists would but live up to the ethics of Epicurus himself, they would make few or no proselytes from the Christian religion. For none† revolt from the faith for such things as are thought peculiar to Christianity: not because they must *love and pray for their enemies*,[n] but because they must not poison or stab them; not because they must not *look upon a woman to lust after her*,[o] but because they are much more restrained from committing the act.‡ If wanton glances and lascivious§ thoughts had been permitted by the Gospel, and only the gross act forbidden,‖ they would have apostatised nevertheless. This we may conjecture from what Plato[p] and others have told us, that it was commonly ἀκράτεια ἡδονῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν, immoderate¶ affections and lusts, that, in the very times of paganism, induced men to be Atheists. It seems their impure and brutal sensuality was too much confined by the religion of *those* countries where even Venus and Bacchus had their temples. Let not, therefore, voluptuous Atheists lay all the fault of their sins upon the infirmity of human nature; nor plead that flesh and blood cannot resist those temptations which have all their force and prevalence from long custom and inveterated habit. What enticement, what

[* learned; 1*st ed.* "ancient."—D.] [† For none; 1*st ed.* "None."—D.]
[n] Matth. v. 44. [o] Verse 28.
[‡ committing the act; 1*st ed.* "the perpetration of their lusts."—D.]
[§ lascivious; 1*st ed.* "libidinous."—D.]
[‖ and only the gross act forbidden; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]
[p] Plato de Legib. lib. x. p. 886. edit. Steph. [=t. viii. p. 464. ed. 1826.—D.]
[¶ immoderate; 1*st ed.* "their immoderate."—D.]

pleasure is there in common profane swearing? Yet neither the fear of God nor of the law will persuade men to leave it. 'Tis prevailing example that hath now made it fashionable; but it hath not always been so, nor will be hereafter. So other epidemical vices, they are rife and predominant only for a season, and must not be ascribed to human nature in the lump. In some countries, intemperance is a necessary part of conversation; in others, sobriety is a virtue universal, without any respect to the duties of religion. Nor can they say, that this is only the difference of climate that inclines one nation to concupiscence and sensual pleasures, another to blood-thirstiness and desire of revenge. It would discover great ignorance in history, not to know that, in all climates, a whole people has been overrun with some recently invented or newly imported kind of vice, which their grandfathers never knew. In the latest accounts of the country of Guiana, we are told, that the eating of human flesh is the beloved pleasure of those savages: two nations of them, by mutual devouring, are reduced to two handfuls of men. When the Gospel of our Saviour was preached to them, they received it with gladness of heart; they could be brought to forego plurality of wives, though that be the main impediment to the conversion of the East Indies. But the great stumbling-block with these Americans, and the only rock of offence, was the forbidding them *to eat their enemies:* that irresistible temptation made them quickly to revolt and relapse into their infidelity. What must we impute this to? to the temperature* of the air, to the nature of the soil, to the influence of the stars? Are these barbarians of man-eating constitutions, that they so hanker after this inhuman diet,† which we cannot imagine without horror? Is not the same thing practised in other parts of that continent? Was it not so in Europe of old, and is it not now so in Africa? If an eleventh commandment had been given, *Thou shalt not eat human flesh;* would

[* What must we impute this to? to the temperature; 1*st ed.* "What, must we impute this to the temperature."—D.]

[† this inhuman diet; 1*st ed.* "this diet."—D.]

not these cannibals have esteemed it more difficult than all the ten? And would not they have really had as much reason as our Atheists to plead the power of the temptation, and the propensity of flesh and blood? How impudent, then, are the Atheists,* that traduce the easy and gracious conditions of the Gospel, as† unreasonable and tyrannical impositions! *Are not God's ways equal,* O ye children of destruction, *and are not your ways unequal?*

II. Secondly and lastly, for the good‡ influence of religion upon *communities* and governments, *habemus confitentes reos;* 'tis so apparent and unquestionable, that 'tis one of the objections of the Atheists, that it was first§ contrived and introduced by politicians, to bring the wild and straggling herds of mankind under subjection and laws. *Out of thy own mouth shalt thou be judged, thou wicked servant.*[q] Thou sayest that the wise institutors of government, souls elevated above the ordinary pitch of men, thought religion necessary to civil obedience. Why, then, dost thou endeavour to undermine this foundation, to undo this cement of society, and to reduce all once again to thy imaginary state of nature and original confusion? No community ever was or can be begun or maintained, but upon the basis of religion. What government can be imagined without judicial proceedings? and what methods of judicature without a religious oath? which implies and supposes an omniscient Being, as conscious to its falsehood or truth, and a revenger of perjury. So that the very nature of an oath (and therefore of society also) is subverted by the Atheist, who professeth to acknowledge nothing superior to himself, no omnipresent Observer of the actions of men. For an Atheist[r] to compose a *system* of *politics* is as absurd and ridiculous as

[* then are the Atheists; 1*st ed.* "are they then."—D.]

[† as; 1*st ed.* "for."—D.]

[‡ for the good; 1*st ed.* "as to the benign."—D.]

[§ the objections of the Atheists, that it was first; 1*st ed.* "the wise objections of the Atheist, that it first was."—D.]

[q] Luke, xix. 22. [r] Hobbes de Cive, Leviathan.

Epicurus's sermons were about *sanctity* and *religious worship*.[t] But there was hope, that the doctrine of absolute uncontrollable power, and the formidable name of *Leviathan*, might flatter and bribe the government into a *toleration of infidelity*. We need have no recourse to notions* and supposition; we have sad experience and convincing example before us, what a rare constitution of government may be had in a whole nation of Atheists. The natives of Newfoundland and New France in America,[u] as they are *said* to live without any sense of religion, so they are *known* to be destitute of its advantages and blessings; without any law, or form of community; without any literature, or sciences, or arts; no towns, no fixed habitations, no agriculture, no navigation. And 'tis entirely owing to the power of religion, that the whole world is not at this time as barbarous as they. And yet I ought not to have called these miserable wretches *a nation of Atheists*. They cannot be said to be of the Atheist's opinion, because they have no opinion at all in the matter: they do not say in their hearts, *There is no God;* for they never once deliberated, if there was one or no. They no more *deny* the existence of a Deity, than they deny the *Antipodes*, the *Copernican system*, or the *Satellites Jovis;* about which they have had no notion or† conception at all. 'Tis the *ignorance* of those poor creatures, and not their *impiety: their* ignorance, as much to be pitied as the impiety of the *Atheists* to‡ be detested and punished. 'Tis of mighty importance to the government to put some timely stop to the spreading contagion of this *pestilence that walketh by day*, that dares to disperse its cursed seeds and principles in the face of the sun. The *fool* in the text had only said *in his heart, There is no God:* he had not spoken it aloud, nor openly blasphemed, in places of public resort. There's too much reason to fear, that some of all orders of men, even

[t] Περὶ Ὁσιότητος. Laërt. De sanctitate et de pietate adversus Deos. *Cic.*

[* notions; 1*st ed.* "notion."—D.]

[u] De Laet, p. 34, 47, 50. Voyage du Sieur de Champlain, p. 28 et 93.

[† or; 1*st ed.* "nor."—D.] [‡ to; 1*st ed.* "is to."—D.]

magistracy itself, have taken the infection; a thing of dreadful consequence, and most imminent danger. Epicurus[v] was somewhat* wiser than ordinary, when he so earnestly advised his disciples against meddling in public affairs: he knew the nature and tendency of his own philosophy; that it would soon become suspected and odious to a government, if ever Atheists were employed in places of trust. But, because he had made one great rule superior to all, *that every man's only good was pleasure of body and contentment of mind*, hence it was, that men of ambitious and turbulent spirits, that were dissatisfied and uneasy with privacy and retirement, were allowed by his own principle to engage in matters of state: and there they generally met with that fortune which their master foresaw. Several cities of Greece,[w] that had made experiment of them in public concerns, drove them out, as incendiaries and pests of commonweals, by severe edicts and proclamations. Atheism is by no means tolerable in the most private condition; but if it aspire to authority and power, if it acquire the command of an army or a navy, if it get upon the bench, or into the senate, or on a throne; what then can be expected but the basest cowardice and treachery, but the foulest prevarication in justice, but betraying and selling the rights and liberties of a people, but arbitrary government and tyrannical oppression? Nay, if Atheism were once, as I may say, the national religion, it would make its own followers the most miserable of men; it would be the kingdom of Satan divided against itself; and the land would be soon brought to desolation. Josephus,[x] who† knew them, hath informed us, that the Sadducees, those Epicureans among the Jews, were not only rough and cruel to men of a different sect from their own, but perfidious and inhuman one towards another. This is the genuine spirit and the natural product of Atheism. No

[v] Plutarch. Ἀδθε βιώσας. Lucret. &c.

[* somewhat; 1*st ed.* "not a little."—D.]

[w] Plutarch. Ὅτι οὐδὲ ἡδέως ζῇν. Cicero, Athenæus, Ælian, &c.

[x] Josephus de Bello Judaico, l. ii. c. 12. [† who; 1*st ed.* "that."—D.]

man, that adheres to that narrow and selfish principle, can ever be just, or generous, or grateful, unless he be sometime overcome by good nature and a happy constitution.[y] No Atheist, as such, can be a true friend, an affectionate relation, or a loyal subject. The appearance and shew of mutual amity among them is wholly owing to the smallness of their number, and to the obligations of a faction. 'Tis like the friendship of pickpockets and highwaymen, that are said to observe strict justice among themselves, and never to defraud a comrade of his share of the booty. But, if we could imagine a whole nation to be cut-purses and robbers, would there then be kept that square dealing and equity in such a monstrous *den of thieves?* And if Atheism should be supposed to become universal in this nation (which seems to be designed and endeavoured, though we know the gates of hell shall not be able to prevail), farewell all ties of friendship and principles of honour; all love for our country and loyalty to our prince; nay, farewell all government and society itself, all professions and arts, and conveniencies of life, all that is laudable or valuable in the world.*

[y] Si sibi ipse consentiat, et non interdum naturæ bonitate vincatur. Cic. de Offic. i. 2.

[* world; *after this word the 1st ed. has the following paragraph:*—

"And now having in the first place explained the words of the *text*, and secondly detected the mere *Deists* of our age to be no better than disguised *Atheists*, seeing they have now no pretence to the deism of Epicurus; and afterwards having shewn that willingly to entertain the *hypothesis of Atheism* (which is literally *to choose death and evil before life and good*, and *to love darkness rather than light*[z]) is the most absurd and inconsiderate *folly*; and that there is nothing to excuse so silly a choice: not any *necessity* of it; for religion doth not impose any articles of faith that are repugnant to our faculties, and incredible to natural reason: not *interest*; because religion itself is, even in this present life, the truest and best interest, as well of every *single person* (for a Christian's belief is the most comfortable, and his hope the most glorious, of all men's, and the practical duties he is obliged to are in themselves agreeable to his nature and conducible to his temporal happiness,) as of *communities and governments*; because religion is not only useful to civil society, but fundamentally necessary to its very birth and constitution: having, I say, competently

[z] Deut. xxx. 15; Joh. iii. 10. [19.]

May the Father of mercies and God of infinite wisdom reduce the foolish from their errors, and make them *wise unto salvation;* confirm the sceptical and wavering minds; and so prevent us, that stand fast, in all our doings, and further us with his continual help, that we may not be of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. *Amen.*

proved these particulars, as far as the usual brevity of such discourses will allow; I shall conclude all with one short reflection, That if *Atheism* or modern *Deism* be evinced to be *folly*, how great must that *folly* be! It must not be bare *folly*, but *madness* and *distraction*. Nor do we need to recur to the stoical paradox, *that all fools are mad;* nor to that saying of one of their own party, who (not out of derision, as some would have it, but out of compliment to the public) called it *insanientem sapientiam*, the *mad* philosophy of Atheism. For so sottishly to lose the purest pleasures and comforts of *this* world, and forego the expectation of immortality in *another;* and so desperately to run the risk of *dwelling with everlasting burnings;* it plainly discovers itself to be what it is; it is manifestly the most pernicious *folly* and deplorable *madness* in the world."—D.]

MATTER AND MOTION CANNOT THINK:

OR,

A CONFUTATION OF ATHEISM

FROM THE

FACULTIES OF THE SOUL.

SERMON II.

Preached April the 4th, 1692.

Acts, xvii. 27.

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him; though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being.

These words are a part of that discourse which St. Paul had at Athens. He had not been long in that inquisitive and pragmatical city, but we find him *encountered by the Epicureans and Stoics,*[a] two sorts of people that were ill* qualified for the Christian faith: the one, by reason of their carnal affections, either believing no God at all, or that he was like unto themselves, dissolved in laziness and ease;[b] the other, out of† spiritual pride, presuming to assert,‡ that a wise man of their sect was equal, and in some cases superior, to the majesty of God himself.[c] These men, *corrupted*

[a] Acts, xvii. 18.

[b] Ἀργὸν καὶ ἀμελές.

[c] Arriani Epictet. l. i. c. 12. Ὡς κατά γε τὸν λόγον οὐδὲ χείρων τῶν Θεῶν, οὐδὲ μικρότερος. Seneca, Ep. 53. Est aliquid quo sapiens antecedat Deum: ille naturæ beneficio, non suo sapiens est.

[* ill; 1st ed. "very ill."—D.]

[† out of; 1st ed. "through their."—D.]

[‡ assert; 1st ed. "declare."—D.]

through philosophy and vain deceit, took our Apostle, and carried him unto Areopagus,[d] (a place in the city whither was the greatest resort of travellers and strangers, of the gravest citizens and magistrates, of their orators and philosophers,) to give an account of himself and the new doctrine that he spoke of: *For,* say they, *thou bringest strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean.*[e] The Apostle, who was to speak to such a promiscuous assembly, has with most admirable prudence and art so accommodated his discourse, that every branch and member of it is directly opposed to a known error and prejudice of some party of his hearers. I will beg leave to be the more prolix in explaining the whole, because it will be a ground and introduction not only to this present, but some other subsequent discourses.

From the inscription of an altar to the Unknown God, which is mentioned by heathen authors, Lucian, Philostratus,* and others,[f] he takes occasion (v. 24) to declare unto them *that God that made the world, and all things therein.* This first doctrine, though admitted by many of his auditors, is directly both against Epicureans, that† ascribed the origin and frame of the world not to the power of God, but the fortuitous concourse of atoms; and‡ Peripatetics, that supposed all things to have been eternally as they now are, and never to have been made at all, either *by* the Deity or *without* him. Which God, says he, *seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in the temples*§ *made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.*[g] This is opposed to the civil and vulgar religion of Athens, which

[d] Ver. 19. [e] Ver. 20.

[* Lucian, Philostratus; 1*st ed.* "as Lucian, and Philostratus."—D.]

[f] Lucianus in Philopat. Philostrat. de Vita Apol. lib. vi. c. 2. Pausan. in Eliacis.

[† directly both against Epicureans, that; 1*st ed.* "expressly against the Epicureans, who."—D.]

[‡ and; 1*st ed.* "and to the."—D.]

[§ *in the temples;* 1*st ed.* "*in temples.*"—D.]

[g] Ver. 25.

furnished and served the Deity* with temples and sacrifices, as if he had really† needed habitation and sustenance. And that the common heathen had such mean apprehensions‡ about the indigency of their gods, appears plainly, to name no more, from Aristophanes's *Plutus* and the *Dialogues* of Lucian. But the philosophers were not concerned§ in this point: all parties and sects, even the Epicureans[h] themselves,‖ did maintain (*τὸ αὐταρκὲς*) the self-sufficiency of the Godhead; and seldom or never sacrificed at all, unless in compliance and condescension¶ to the custom of their country. There's a very remarkable passage in Tertullian's *Apology, Who forces a philosopher to sacrifice?*[i] &c. It appears from thence, that the philosophers, no less than the Christians, neglected the pagan worship and sacrifices; though what was connived at in the one was made highly penal and capital in the other. *And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bound*[s] *of their habitation.*[j] This doctrine about the beginning of human race, though agreeable enough to the Platonists and Stoics, is apparently levelled against** the Epicureans and Aristotelians: one of whom produced†† their primitive men from mere accident or mechanism; the other denied that man had any beginning at all, but had eternally continued thus by succession and propagation. Neither were the commonalty of

[* furnished and served the Deity; 1*st ed.* "worshipped God."—D.]

[† he had really; 1*st ed.* "he really."—D.]

[‡ heathen had such mean apprehensions; 1*st ed.* "heathens had such a mean apprehension."—D.]

[§ concerned; 1*st ed.* "touched."—D.]

[h] Lucret. ii. Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri. [v. 649.—D.]

[‖ themselves; 1*st ed.* "forsooth."—D.]

[¶ unless in compliance and condescension; 1*st ed.* "unless in condescension."—D.]

[i] Tertull. Apol. cap. 46. Quis enim philosophum sacrificare . . . . compellit? Quinimmo et deos vestros palam destruunt, et superstitiones vestras commentariis quoque accusant.

[j] Ver. 26.

[** is apparently levelled against; 1*st ed.* "doth apparently thwart."—D.]

[†† produced; 1*st ed.* "did produce."—D.]

Athens unconcerned in this point. For although, as we learn from Isocrates, Demosthenes, and others of their countrymen,[k] they professed themselves to be *αὐτόχθονες, aborigines*, not transplanted by colonies or otherwise from any foreign nation, but born out of their own soil in Attica, and had the same earth for their parent, their nurse, and their country; and though some perhaps* might believe, that all the rest of mankind were derived from them,[l] and so might apply and interpret the words of the Apostle to this foolish tradition; yet that conceit of deriving the whole race of men from the *aborigines* of Attica† was entertained but by a few; for they generally allowed that the Egyptians and Sicilians, and some others, were *aborigines* also, as well as themselves.[m] Then follow the words of the text: *That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him; though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being.*[n] And this he confirms by the authority of a writer that lived above three hundred years before: *as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.* This indeed was no argument to the Epicurean auditors, who undervalued all argument from authority, and especially from the poets.[o] Their master Epicurus had boasted, that in all his writings he had not cited one single authority out of any book whatsoever.[p] And the poets they particularly hated, because on all occasions they introduced the ministry of the gods, and taught the separate existence of human souls. But‡ it was of great weight and

[k] Isocrates in Paneg. Demosth. in Epitaph. Cic. Orat. pro Flacco. Euripides, &c.

[* and though some perhaps; 1*st ed.* "and perhaps some few."—D.]

[l] Diog. Laërt. in Præf.

[† of deriving the whole race of men from the *aborigines* of Attica; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[m] Thucyd. lib. vi. Herodot. &c.

[n] Verse 27, 28.

[o] Plutarch. de Aud. Poet. et contra Colot.

[p] Laërt. in Vita Epicuri.

[‡ who undervalued all argument from authority . . . . . and taught the separate existence of human souls. But; 1*st ed.* "who particularly had a contempt of and spite against the poets, because on all occasions they introduced

moment to the common people, who held the poets in mighty esteem and veneration, and used them as their masters of morality and religion. And the other sects too of philosophers* did frequently adorn and confirm their discourses by citations out of poets. *Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and*† *man's device.*[q] This is directly levelled against the gross idolatry of the vulgar (for the philosophers are not concerned in it), that believed the very statues of gold, and silver, and other materials, to be God, and terminated their prayers in those images; as I might shew from many passages of Scripture, from the apologies of the primitive Christians, and the heathen writers themselves. *And the times of this ignorance God winked at,* (the meaning of which is, as upon a like occasion the same Apostle hath expressed it, that *in times past he suffered all nations to walk in their own ways,*[r]) *but now commandeth every one to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*[s] Hitherto the Apostle had never contradicted all his audience at once: though at every part of his discourse some of them might be uneasy, yet others were of his side; and all along a moderate silence and attention was observed, because every point was agreeable to the notions of the greater party.‡ But *when they heard of the resurrection of the dead,* the interruption and clamour became uni-

the ministry of the gods, and taught the separate existence of human souls: and their master Epicurus had bragged, that in all his writings he had not cited one single authority out of any book whatsoever. But."—D.]

[* sects too of philosophers; 1*st ed.* "sects of philosophers likewise."—D.]

[q] Ver. 29. [r] Acts, xiv. 16. [s] Ver. 30, 31.

[† *and*; 1*st ed.* "*or*."—D.]

[‡ all his audience at once . . . . . the notions of the greater party; 1*st ed.* "the opinions of all his hearers at once: so that although at every part of his discourse some of them might be uneasy and nettled, yet a moderate silence and attention was still observed, because it was agreeable to the notions of the rest."—D.]

versal; so that here the Apostle was obliged to break off, and *depart* from among them.*[t] What could be the reason of this general dissent from the notion of the resurrection, since almost all of them believed† the immortality of the soul? St. Chrysostom hath a conceit, that the Athenians took Ἀνάστασις (the original word for *resurrection*) to be preached to them as a goddess, and in this fancy he is followed by some of the moderns. The ground of the conjecture is the 18th verse of this chapter, where some said, *What will this babbler say?* other some, *He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods* (ξένων δαιμονίων, *strange deities*, which comprehends both sexes), *because he preached unto them,* Ἰησοῦν καὶ τὴν Ἀνάστασιν, *Jesus and the Resurrection.* Now, say they, it could not be said *deities* in the plural number, unless it be supposed that Ἀνάστασις is a *goddess*, as well as *Jesus* a *God.* But we know such a permutation of number is frequent in all languages. We have another example of it in the very text; *as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring:*[u] and yet the Apostle meant only one, Aratus the Cilician, his countryman, in whose astronomical poem this passage is now extant.[v] So that although he preached to the Athenians Jesus alone, yet, by a common mode of speech, he might be called *a setter forth of strange gods.* 'Tis my opinion, that the general distaste and clamour proceeded from a mistake about the nature of the Christian resurrection. The word *resurrection* (ἀναστήσασθαι and ἀνάστασις) was well enough known amongst the Athenians; as appears at this time from Homer, Æschylus, and Sophocles:[w] they could hardly then possibly imagine it to signify

[* was obliged to break off, and *depart*; 1*st ed.* "broke off his discourse, and *departed.*"—D.]

[t] Ver. 33.

[† since almost all of them believed; 1*st ed.* "seeing that almost all of them did believe."—D.]

[u] Ver. 28.

[v] Arati Phæn. v. 5. . . . . πάντη δὲ Διὸς κεχρήμεθα πάντες, Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.

[w] Hom. Il. Ω. 551. Οὐδέ μιν ἀναστήσεις, &c. Æsch. Eumen. 655. [650. ed. Stan.—D.] Ἀνδρὸς δ' ἐπειδὰν αἷμ' ἀναστάσῃ κόνις, Ἅπαξ θανόντος οὔτις ἔστ'

a goddess. But then it always* denoted a returning from the state of the dead to this present world; to eat and drink and converse upon† earth; and so, after another period of life, to die again as before. And Festus, a Roman, seems to have had the same apprehensions about it: for, when he declares the case of St. Paul his prisoner to King Agrippa, he tells him, that the accusation was only about certain questions of the Jewish superstition; and *of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.*[x] So that when the Athenians heard him mention the resurrection of the dead, which, according to their acceptation of the word, was a contradiction to common sense, and to the‡ experience of all places and ages, they had no patience to give any longer attention. His *words seemed to them as idle tales,*[y] as the first news of our Saviour's resurrection did to the apostles themselves. All interrupted and mocked him, except a few, that seem to have understood him aright, which said *they would hear him again of this matter.* Just as when our Saviour said in an allegorical and mystical sense, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you,*[z] the hearers understood him literally and grossly: *The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? This is a hard saying; who can hear it?*[a] *And from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.*[b]

I have now gone through this excellent discourse of the apostle, in which many most important truths are clearly and succinctly delivered; such as the existence, the spirituality, and all-sufficiency of God; the creation of the world; the origination of mankind from one common stock, accord-

ἀνάστασις. [*In* 1*st ed. the passage is pointed,* Ἀνδ. δ' ἐπ. αἴ. ἀν. κόνις Ἅπαξ θανόντος, οὔτ. ἔστ' ἀν.—D.] Soph. Electra, 136. Ἀλλ' οὗτοι τόν γ' ἐξ ᾅδα πεγκοίνου Λίμνας πατέρ' ἀνστάσεις, οὔτε γόοισιν, οὐ λιταῖς.

[* they could hardly then possibly imagine it to signify a goddess. But then it always; 1*st ed.* "(so that it could hardly possibly be imagined to be a goddess) but it always."—D.] [† upon; 1*st ed.* "upon the."—D.]

[‡ and to the; 1*st ed.* "and the."—D.]

[x] Acts, xxv. 9. [19.] [y] Luke, xxiv. 11. [z] John, vi. 53. [a] Ver. 60. [b] Ver. 66.

ing to the history of Moses; the divine Providence in overruling all nations and people; the new doctrine of repentance by the preaching of the Gospel; the resurrection of the dead; and the appointed day of an universal judgment. To all which particulars, by God's permission and assistance, I shall say something in due time. But at present I have confined myself to that near and internal* and convincing argument of the being of God, which we have from human nature itself; and which appears to be principally here recommended by St. Paul in the words of the text, *That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him; though he be not far from every one of us: for in him* (that is, by his power) *we live, and move, and have our being.*

The proposition, which I shall speak to from this text, is this: that the very life, and vital motion, and the formal essence and nature of man, is wholly owing to the power of God; and that the consideration of ourselves, of our own souls and bodies, both directly and nearly conduct us to the acknowledgment of his existence. And,

1. I shall prove, that there is an immaterial substance in us, which we call soul and spirit, essentially distinct from our bodies; and that this spirit doth necessarily evince the existence of a supreme and spiritual Being. And,

2. That the organical structure of human bodies, whereby they are fitted to live and move, and be vitally informed by the soul, is unquestionably the workmanship of a most wise, and powerful, and beneficent Maker. But I will reserve this latter part for the next opportunity; and my present undertaking shall be this, to evince the being of God from the consideration of human souls.

(1.) And first, I say, there is an immaterial substance in us, which we call soul, essentially distinct from our bodies. I shall lay it† down as self-evident, that there is something in our composition that thinks and apprehends, and reflects and deliberates; that‡ determines and doubts, consents and

[* internal; 1*st ed.* "intrinsical."—D.] [† it; 1*st ed.* "this."—D.]
[‡ that; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

denies; that wills, and demurs, and resolves, and chooses, and rejects; that receives various sensations and impressions from external objects, and produces voluntary motions of several parts of our bodies. This every man is conscious of; neither can any one be so sceptical as to doubt of or deny it; that very *doubting* or *denying* being part of what I would suppose,* and including several of the rest in their ideas and notions. And in the next place, 'tis as self-evident, that these faculties and operations of thinking, and willing, and perceiving, must proceed from something or other as their efficient cause; mere nothing being never able to produce any thing at all. So that if these powers of cogitation, and volition, and sensation, are neither inherent in matter as such, nor producible in matter† by any motion and modification of it, it necessarily follows, that they proceed from some cogitative substance, some incorporeal inhabitant within us, which we call spirit and soul.

1.) But first, these faculties of sensation and perception are not inherent in matter as such; for, if it were so, what monstrous absurdities would follow! every stock and stone would be a percipient and rational creature. We should have as much feeling upon clipping a hair of the head, as upon pricking a nerve.‡ Or rather, as men, that is, as a§ complex being, compounded of many vital parts, we should have no feeling nor perception at all. For every single atom of our bodies would be a distinct animal, endued with self-consciousness and personal sensation of its own. And a great number of such living and thinking particles could not possibly, by their mutual contact and pressing and striking, compose one greater individual animal, with one mind and understanding, and a vital consension of the whole body,

[* part of what I would suppose; 1*st ed.* "each of them mentioned and supposed before."—D.]

[† producible in matter; 1*st ed.* "acquirable to matter."—D.]

[‡ clipping a hair of the head, as upon pricking a nerve; 1*st ed.* "the clipping off a hair, as the cutting of a nerve."—D.]

[§ as a; 1*st ed.* "a."—D.]

any more than a swarm of bees, or a crowd of men and women, can be conceived to make up one particular living creature, compounded and constituted of the aggregate of them all.

2.) It remains, therefore, secondly, that seeing matter in general, as matter, has not any sensation or thought; if it have them at all, they must be the result of some modification of it: it must acquire them by some organical disposition; by such and such determinate motions, by the action and passion* of one particle upon another. And this is the opinion of every Atheist and counterfeit Deist of these times, that believes there is no substance but matter, and excludes all incorporeal nature out of the number of beings.

Now, to give a clear and full† confutation of this atheistical assertion, I will proceed in this method.

I. First I will give a true notion and idea of matter; whereby it will again‡ appear that it has no inherent faculty of sense and perception.

II. I will prove, that no particular sort§ of matter, as the brain and animal spirits,‖ hath any power of sense and perception.

III. I will shew, that motion in general superadded to matter cannot produce any sense and perception.

IV. I will demonstrate, that no particular sort of¶ motion, as of the animal spirits** through muscles and nerves, can beget sense and perception.

V. I will evince, that no action and passion†† of the animal spirits, one particle upon‡‡ another, can create any sense and perception.

[* passion; 1*st ed.* "reaction."—D.]
[† clear and full; 1*st ed.* "clearer and fuller."—D.]
[‡ again; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.] [§ sort; 1*st ed.* "species."—D.]
[‖ spirits; 1*st ed.* "spirit."—D.]
[¶ particular sort of; 1*st ed.* "determinate."—D.]
[** spirits; 1*st ed.* "spirit."—D.]
[†† passion; 1*st ed.* "percussion."—D.]
[‡‡ spirits, one particle upon; 1*st ed.* "spirit, one particle against."—D.]

VI. I will answer the Atheist's argument of matter of fact and experience in brute beasts, which, say they, are allowed to be mere matter, and yet have some degree of sense and perception.

And first I will give a true notion and idea of matter; whereby it will appear that it has no inherent faculty of sense and perception. And I will offer no other but what all competent judges, and even Atheists themselves, do allow of; and which, being part of the Epicurean and Democritean philosophy, is providentially one of the best antidotes against their other impious opinions; as the oil of scorpions is said to be against the poison of their stings. When we frame in our minds any notion of matter, we conceive nothing else but extension and bulk, which is impenetrable, and divisible, and passive; by which three properties is understood, that any one* particular quantity of matter doth hinder all other from intruding into its place till itself be removed out of it; that it may be divided and broken into numerous parts, of different sizes and figures, which by various ranging† and disposing may produce an immense diversity of surfaces and textures; that, if it once be‡ bereaved of motion, it cannot of itself acquire it again; but it either must be impelled§ by some other body from without, or (say we, though not the Atheist) be intrinsically moved by an immaterial self-active substance, that can penetrate and pervade it. Wherefore in the whole nature and idea of matter we have nothing but substance with magnitude,‖ and figure, and situation, and a capacity of being moved and divided. So that no parts of matter, considered by themselves, are either hot or cold, either white or black, either bitter or sweet, or

[* any one; 1*st ed.* "any."—D.]

[† ranging; 1*st ed.* "ranking."—D.]

[‡ once be; 1*st ed.* "be once."—D.]

[§ but it either must be impelled; 1*st ed.* "nor till it be thrust or struck."—D.]

[‖ but substance with magnitude; 1*st ed.* "but magnitude."—D.

betwixt those* extremes. All the various mixtures and conjugations of atoms do beget nothing but new inward texture, and alteration of surface. No sensible qualities, as light, and colour, and heat, and sound, can be subsistent in the bodies themselves absolutely considered, without a relation to our eyes, and ears, and other organs of sense. These qualities are only the effects of our sensation, which arise from the different motions upon our nerves from objects without, according to their various modification and position. For example: when pellucid colourless glass or water, by being beaten into† powder or froth, do acquire a very intense whiteness, what can we imagine to be produced in the glass or water but a new disposition of parts? nay, an object under the self-same disposition and modification, when 'tis viewed by us under differing proportions, doth represent very differing colours, without any change at all in itself. For that very same opake and white‡ powder of glass, when 'tis seen through a good microscope, doth exhibit all its little fragments pellucid and colourless, as the whole appeared to the naked eye before it was pounded. So that whiteness, and redness, and coldness, and the like, are only ideas and vital passions in us that see and feel; but can no more be conceived to be real and distinct qualities in the bodies themselves, than roses or honey can be thought to smell or taste their own sweetness, or an organ be conscious of§ its music, or gunpowder of|| its flashing and noise.

Thus far, then, we have proved, and 'tis agreed on all hands, that in our conception of any quantity of body there is nothing but figure, and site, and a capacity of motion: which motion, if it be actually excited in it,¶ doth only cause a new order and contexture of parts: so that all the

[* those; 1*st ed.* "the."—D.] [† into; 1*st ed.* "into a."—D.]
[‡ that very same opake and white; 1*st ed.* "that same opake, white."—D.]
[§ of; 1*st ed.* "to."—D.] [|| of; 1*st ed.* "to."—D.]
[¶ of motion: which motion, if it be actually excited in it; 1*st ed.* "of motion, either of the whole, or the insensible parts: which motion, if it be actually impressed upon it."—D.]

ideas of sensible qualities are not inherent in the inanimate bodies, but are the effects of their motion upon our nerves, and sympathetical and vital passions produced within ourselves.

II. Our second inquiry must be, what it is in the constitution and composition of a man that hath the faculty of receiving such ideas and passions? Let us* carry in our minds this true notion of body in general, and apply it to our own substance, and observe what prerogatives this rational machine (as the Atheists would make us to be) can challenge above other parcels of matter. We observe, then, in this understanding piece of clock-work, that this† body, as well as other senseless matter, has colour, and warmth, and softness, and the like. But we have proved it before, and 'tis acknowledged, that these qualities are not subsistent in those bodies, but are ideas and sensations‡ begotten in something else: so that 'tis not blood and bones that can be conscious of their own hardness or§ redness; and we are still to seek for something else in our frame and make, that must receive these impressions. Will they say that these ideas are performed by the brain? But the difficulty returns upon them again; for we perceive that the like qualities of softness, whiteness, and warmth, do belong to the brain itself; and since|| the brain is but body, those qualities (as we have shewn) cannot be inherent in it, but are the sensations¶ of some other substance without it. It cannot be the brain, then, which imagines those qualities to be in itself.**

But, they may say, 'tis not the gross substance of the

[* of receiving such ideas and passions? Let us; 1*st ed.* "of forming such ideas; what is that principle of life, and self-activity, and reason, within us, that performs those higher operations of cogitation, and appetite, and will? Let us."—D.]

[† this; 1*st ed.* "his."—D.]

[‡ ideas and sensations; 1*st ed.* "operations of fancy."—D.]

[§ or; 1*st ed.* "and."—D.] [|| since; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.]

[¶ sensations; 1*st ed.* "passions."—D.]

[** It cannot be the brain, then, which imagines those qualities to be in itself; 1*st ed.* "Therefore the brain is not that nature which imagines those qualities of itself."—D.]

brain that causes perception, but the animal spirits that have their residence there; which are void of sensible qualities,* because they never fall under our senses, by reason of their minuteness. But we conceive by our reason, though we cannot see them with our eyes,† that every one of these also hath a determinate figure; they are spheres, or cubes, or pyramids, or cones, or of some shape or other that is irregular and nameless: and all these are but modes and affections of magnitude; and the ideas of such modes can no more be subsistent in the atoms so modified, than the idea of redness was just now found to be inherent in the blood, or that of whiteness in the brain. And what relation or affinity is there between a minute body and cogitation, any more than the greatest? Is a small drop of rain any wiser than the ocean? or do we grind inanimate corn into living and rational meal? My very nails, or my hair, or the horns and hoofs of a beast, may bid as fair for understanding and sense as the finest animal spirits‡ of the brain.

III. But thirdly, they will say, 'tis not the bulk and substance of the animal spirits, but their motion and agility, that produces cogitation§ and sense. If, then, motion in general, or any degree of its velocity, can beget cogitation, surely a ship under sail must be a very|| intelligent creature, though while she lies at anchor those faculties must be¶ asleep: some cold water or ice may be phlegmatic and senseless, but when it boils in a kettle it has wonderful heats of thinking and ebullitions of fancy. Nay, the whole corporeal mass, all the brute and stupid matter of the universe, must, upon these terms, be allowed to have life and understanding;

[* spirits that have their residence there; which are void of sensible qualities; 1*st ed.* "spirit and insensible particles, that have their rendezvous there, and are devoid of those qualities."—D.]

[† by our reason, though we cannot see them with our eyes; *not in* 1*st ed.* —D.]

[‡ spirits; 1*st ed.* "spirit."—D.]

[§ spirits, but their motion and agility, that produces cogitation; 1*st ed.* "spirit, but its motion and agility, that produce intellection."—D.]

[|| very; 1*st ed.* "most."—D.] [¶ must be; 1*st ed.* "be."—D.]

since* there is nothing, that we know of, in a state of absolute rest. Those things that seem to be at rest† upon the surface of the earth are daily wheeled about its axis, and yearly about the sun with a prodigious swiftness.

IV. But fourthly, they will say, 'tis not motion in general that can do these feats of sensation and perception; but a particular sort of it, in‡ an organised body, through the determinate roads and channels of muscles and nerves. But, I pray, among all the kinds of motion, whether straight,§ or circular, or parabolical, or in what curve they please, what pretence can one make to thinking and liberty of will more than another? Why do not these persons make a diagram of these cogitative lines and angles, and demonstrate their properties of perception and appetite, as plainly as we know the other properties of triangles and circles? But how little can any motion, either circular or other, contribute to the production of thought! No such circular motion of an‖ atom can be all of it existent at once; it must needs be made gradually and successively, both as to place and time; for¶ body cannot at the same instant be in more places than one. So that at any instant of time the moving atom is but in one single point of the line. Therefore all its motion, but in that** one point, is either future or past; and no other parts are co-existent or contemporary with it. Now, what is not present is nothing at all, and can be the efficient of nothing. If motion, then, be the cause of thought, thought must be produced by one single point of motion, a point with relation to time as well as to place. And such a point,†† to

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.] [† be at rest; 1*st ed.* "be so."—D.]
[‡ in; 1*st ed* "that is made in."—D.] [§ straight; 1*st ed.* "direct."—D.]
[‖ such circular motion of an; 1*st ed.* "such motion of the same."—D.]
[¶ for; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]
[** all its motion, but in that; 1*st ed.* "all but that."—D.]
[†† If motion, then, be the cause of thought, thought must be produced by one single point of motion, a point with relation to time as well as to place. And such a point; 1*st ed.* "So that if motion be the cause of thought, then thought must be produced by one single *punctum* of motion with relation to time as well as place. And such a *punctum*."—D.]

our conceptions, is almost equivalent to permanency and rest, or at least to any other point of any* motion whatsoever. What, then, is become of the privilege of that organical motion of the animal spirits† above any other? Again, we have shewn, that this circular and other motion is but the successive flux of an atom, and is never existent together; and indeed is a pure *ens rationis*, an operation of the soul, which, considering past motion and future, and recollecting the whole by the memory and fancy, calls this by one denomination, and that by another. How then can that motion be the efficient of thought, which is evidently the effect and the product of it?

V. But fifthly, they will say farther (which is their last refuge), that 'tis not motion alone, or under this or that denomination,‡ that produceth cogitation; but when it falls out that numerous particles of matter, aptly disposed and directed, do interfere in their motions, and strike and knock one another; this is it which begets our sensation. All the active power and vigour of the mind, our faculties of reason, imagination, and will, are the wonderful result of this mutual occurse, this pulsion and repercussion of atoms: just as we experience it in the flint and the steel; you may move them apart as long as you please, to very little purpose; but 'tis the hitting and collision of them that must make them strike fire. You may remember I have proved before, that light and heat, and the rest of those qualities, are not such ideas§ in the bodies as we perceive in ourselves: so that this smiting of the steel with the flint doth only make a comminution, and a very rapid whirling and melting of some particles; but that idea of flame is wholly in us. But what a strange and miraculous thing should we count it, if the flint and the steel, instead of a few sparks, should chance to strike‖ out definitions and syllogisms? and yet it's altogether as reason-

[* point of any; 1*st ed.* "*punctum* of all."—D.]
[† spirits; 1*st ed.* "spirit."—D.]
[‡ denomination; 1*st ed.* "determination."—D.]
[§ ideas; 1*st ed.* "passions."—D.] [‖ strike; 1*st ed.* "knock."—D.]

able as this sottish opinion of the Atheists, that dead senseless atoms can ever justle and knock* one another into life and understanding. All that can be effected by such encounters of atoms, is either the imparting or receiving of motion, or a new determination and direction of its course. Matter, when it acts upon matter, can communicate nothing but motion; and that we have shewed before to be utterly unable to produce those sensations.† And again, how can that concussion of atoms be capable of begetting those internal‡ and vital affections, that self-consciousness and those other§ powers and energies that we feel in our minds? seeing they only strike upon the outward surfaces, they cannot inwardly pervade one another; they cannot have any penetration of dimensions and conjunction of substance. But, it may be, these atoms of theirs may have sense and perception in them,‖ but they are refractory and sullen; and therefore, like men of the same tempers, must be banged and buffeted into reason. And indeed that way of argumentation would be most proper and effectual upon these atheistical atomists themselves. 'Tis a vigorous execution of good laws, and not rational discourses only, either neglected or not understood, that must reclaim the profaneness of those perverse and unreasonable men. For what can be said more to such persons, that are either so disingenuous or so stupid, as to profess to believe that all the natural powers and acquired habits of the mind, that penetrating understanding and accurate judgment, that strength of memory and readiness of wit, that liberality, and justice, and prudence, and magnanimity, that charity and beneficence to mankind, that ingenuous fear and awful love of God, that comprehensive knowledge of the histories and languages of so many nations, that experienced

[* knock; 1*st ed.* "thump."—D.]

[† sensations; 1*st ed.* "operations of our minds."—D.]

[‡ internal; 1*st ed.* "intrinsical."—D.]

[§ and those other; 1*st ed.* "and other."—D.]

[‖ these atoms of theirs may have sense and perception in them; 1*st ed.* "that these atoms of theirs may have it in them."—D.]

insight into the works and wonders of nature, that rich vein of poetry and inexhausted fountain of eloquence, those lofty flights of thought and almost intuitive perceptions* of abstruse notions, those exalted discoveries of mathematical theorems and divine contemplations, all the† admirable endowments and capacities of human nature, which we sometimes see actually existent in one and the same person, can proceed from the blind shuffling and casual clashing of atoms. I could as easily take up with that senseless assertion of the Stoics,[f] that virtues and vices, and sciences and arts, and fancies and passions, and appetites, are all of them real bodies and distinct animals, as with this of the Atheist, that they can all be derived from the power of mere bodies. 'Tis utterly incredible and impossible; and we cannot without indignation go about to refute such an absurd imagination, such a gross contradiction to unprejudiced reason. And yet, if the Atheists had not been driven from all their posts and their subterfuges; if we had not pursued their atoms through all their turnings and windings, their cells and recesses, their interferings and justlings, they would boast‡ that they could not be answered, and make a mighty§ flutter and triumph.

Nay, though they are so miserably confounded and baffled, and can offer no further explication of the cause and the manner; yet they will, sixthly, urge matter of fact and experience, that mere body may produce cogitation and sense. For, say they, do but observe the actions of some brutes, how nearly they approach to human reason, and visibly discover some glimpses of understanding: and if that be performed by the pure mechanism of their bodies, (as many do allow, who yet believe the being of God, and an immaterial spirit in man,) then 'tis but raising our conceptions, and supposing mankind to be engines of a finer make

[* perceptions; 1*st ed.* "perception."—D.]
[† the; 1*st ed.* "these."—D.]
[f] Seneca, Ep. 113. Plutarch. de Contrad. Stoic.
[‡ boast; 1*st ed.* "have boasted."—D.]
[§ and make a mighty; 1*st ed.* "with an arrogant scorn and a mighty."—D.]

and contexture, and the business is done. I must confess that the Cartesians and some others, men that have given no occasion to be suspected of irreligion, have asserted that brutes are mere *machines* and *automata*. I cannot now engage in the controversy, neither is there any necessity to do so; for religion is not endangered by either opinion. If brutes be said to have sense and immaterial souls, what need we be concerned, whether those souls shall be immortal, or annihilated at the time of death? This objection supposes the being of God; and he will do all things for the wisest and best ends. Or, if brutes be supposed to be bare engines* and machines, I admire and adore the divine artifice and skill in such a wonderful contrivance. But I shall deny then that they have any reason or sense, if they be nothing but matter. Omnipotence itself cannot create cogitative body. And 'tis not any imperfection in the power of God, but an incapacity in the subject. The ideas of matter and thought are absolutely incompatible; and this the Cartesians themselves do allow. Do but convince them that brutes have the least participation of thought, or will, or appetite, or sensation, or fancy, and they'll readily retract their opinion. For none but besotted Atheists do join the two notions together, and believe brutes to be rational or sensitive machines. They are either the one or the other; either endued with sense and some glimmering rays of reason from a higher principle than matter; or (as the Cartesians say) they are purely body, void† of all sensation and life, and, like the idols of the Gentiles, *they have eyes, and see not; ears, and hear not; noses, and smell not:* they eat without hunger, and drink without thirst, and howl without pain. They perform the outward material actions, but they have no inward self-

[* If brutes be said . . . . . supposed to be bare engines; 1*st ed.* "If brutes have immaterial souls, they'll say, then they must be either annihilated or immortal. This objection supposeth the being of God: and God can as easily annihilate as create. Or if they be immortal, what need we be concerned about it? 'tis only by the good pleasure of their Maker, who doth all things for the best. And if they be bare engines."—D.]

[† void; 1*st ed.* "devoid."—D.]

consciousness, nor any more perception of what they do or suffer than a looking-glass has of the objects it reflects, or the index of a watch of the hour it points to. And as one of those watches, when it was first presented to the Emperor of China, was taken there for an animal; so, on the contrary, our Cartesians take brute animals for a sort of watches. For, considering the infinite distance betwixt the poor mortal artist, and the almighty Opificer; the few wheels and motions of a watch, and the innumerable springs and organs in the bodies of brutes; they may affirm, (as they think, without either absurdity or impiety,) that they are nothing but moving *automata*, as the fabulous statues of Dædalus,[ε] bereaved of all true life and vital sensation, which never act spontaneously and freely: but as watches must be wound up to set them a-going, so their motions also are excited and inhibited, are moderated and managed, by the objects without them.

(2.) And now that I have gone through the six parts that I proposed, and sufficiently shewn that sense and perception can never be the product of any kind of matter and motion, it remains therefore that it must necessarily proceed from some incorporeal substance within us. And though we cannot conceive the manner of the soul's action and passion, nor what hold it can lay on the body when it voluntarily moves it, yet we are as certain that it doth so, as of any mathematical truth whatsoever; or at least of such as are proved from the impossibility or absurdity of the contrary, a way of proof that is allowed for infallible demonstration.* Why one motion of the body begets an idea of pleasure in the mind, another an idea of pain; why† such a

ε Vide Zenobium et Suidam in Δαιδάλου ποιήματα, et Scholiastem Eurip. Hecubæ, v. 838. [=*Schol.* t. iv. p. 189. ed. Matt.—D.]

[* a way of proof that is allowed for infallible demonstration; 1*st ed.* "which notwithstanding are allowed for infallible demonstrations."—D.]

[† another an idea of pain; why; 1*st ed.* "and another of pain, and others of the other senses; why."—D.]

disposition of the body induces* sleep, another disturbs all the operations of the soul, and occasions a lethargy or frenzy; this knowledge exceeds our narrow faculties, and is out of the reach of our discovery. I discern some excellent final causes of such a vital conjunction of body and soul; but the instrumental I know not, nor what invisible bands and fetters unite them together. I resolve all that into the sole pleasure and *fiat* of our omnipotent Creator, whose existence (which is my last point) is so plainly and nearly deducible from the established proof of an immaterial soul, that no wonder the resolved Atheists do so labour and bestir themselves to fetch sense and perception out of the power of matter. I will despatch it in three words. For, since† we have shewn that there is an incorporeal substance within us, whence did that proceed, and how came it into being? It did not exist from all eternity; that's too absurd to be supposed; nor could it come out of nothing into being without an efficient cause. Something, therefore, must have created our souls out of nothing; and that something (since‡ nothing can give more than it has) must itself have all the perfections that it hath given to them. There is, therefore, an immaterial and intelligent Being, that created our souls; which Being was either eternal itself, or created immediately or ultimately by some other Eternal, that has§ all those perfections. There is, therefore, originally *an eternal, immaterial, intelligent Creator;* all which together are the *attributes*‖ *of God alone.*

And now that I have finished all the parts which I proposed to discourse of, I will conclude all with a short application to the Atheists. And I would advise them, as a friend, to leave off this dabbling and smattering in philosophy, this shuffling and cutting with atoms. It never succeeded well with them, and they always come off with the loss. Their old master Epicurus seems to have had his

[* induces; 1*st ed.* "induceth."—D.]
[† since; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.] [‡ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.]
[§ has; 1*st ed.* "hath."—D.] [‖ *attributes;* 1*st ed.* "*attribute.*"—D.]

brains so muddled and confounded with them, that he scarce ever kept in the right way; though the main maxim of his philosophy was to trust to his senses, and follow his nose. I will not take notice of his doting conceit, that the sun and moon are no bigger than they appear to the eye, a foot or half a yard over; and that the stars are no larger than so many glow-worms.[h] But let us see how he manages his atoms, those almighty tools that do every thing of themselves, without the help of a workman. When the atoms, says he, *descend* in infinite space, (very ingeniously spoken, to make high and low in infinity,) they do not fall plumb down, but decline a little from the perpendicular, either obliquely or in a curve; and this declination, says he, from the direct line, is the cause of our liberty of will.[i] But, I say, this declination of atoms in their descent was itself either necessary or voluntary. If it was necessary, how then could that necessity ever beget liberty? If it was voluntary, then atoms had that power of volition before: and what becomes then of the Epicurean doctrine of the fortuitous production of worlds? The whole business is contradiction, and ridiculous nonsense. 'Tis as if one should say, that a bowl equally poised, and thrown upon a plain and smooth bowling-green, will run necessarily and fatally in a direct motion; but if it be made with a bias, that may decline it a little from a straight line, it may acquire by that motion a liberty of will, and so run spontaneously to the jack. It would behove the Atheists to give over such trifling as this, and resume the old solid way of confuting religion. They should deny the being of the soul, because they cannot see it. This would be an invincible argument against us; for we can never exhibit it to their touch, nor expose it to their view, nor shew them the colour and complexion of a soul. They should dispute, as a bold brother of theirs did, that he was sure there was no

[h] Epicurus apud Laërt. Lucret. lib. v. Cicero de Fin. lib. i. Acad. lib. ii.

[i] Lucret. lib. ii. Cicero de Fato, et lib. i. de Nat. Deorum. Plutarch, &c.

God, because, says he, if there was one, he would have struck me to hell with thunder and lightning, that have so reviled and blasphemed him. This would be an objection indeed. Alas, all that we could answer is in the next words to the text, *That God hath appointed a day in which he will judge all the world in righteousness;* and that *the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of God,* which are some of his attributes, and essential perfections *of his being,* ought not to be abused and perverted into arguments *against his being.* But, if this will not do, we must yield ourselves overcome; for we neither can nor desire to *command fire to come down from heaven and consume them,* and give them such experimental conviction of the existence of God. So that they ought to take these methods, if they would successfully attack religion. But if they will still be meddling with atoms, be hammering and squeezing understanding out of them, I would advise them to make use of their own understanding for the instance. Nothing, in my opinion, could run us down more effectually than that; for we readily allow, that if any understanding can possibly be produced by such clashing of senseless atoms, 'tis that of an Atheist that hath the fairest pretensions and the best title to it. We know it is *the fool that* hath said in his heart, There is no God.* And 'tis no less a truth than a paradox, that there are no greater *fools* than atheistical *wits;* and none so *credulous* as *infidels.* No article of religion, though as demonstrable as the nature of the thing can admit, hath credibility enough for them. And yet these same cautious and quick-sighted gentlemen can wink and swallow down this sottish opinion about percipient atoms, which exceeds in incredibility all the fictions of Æsop's fables. For is it not every whit as likely, or more, that cocks and bulls might discourse, and hinds and panthers hold conferences about religion, as that atoms can do so? that atoms can invent† arts and

[* it is *the fool that;* 1*st ed.* "who it is *that.*"—D.]

[† can do so? that atoms can invent; 1*st ed.* "can do so? can invent."—D.]

sciences, can institute society and government, can make leagues and confederacies, can devise methods of peace and stratagems of war? And, moreover, the modesty of mythology deserves to be commended; the scenes there are laid at a distance; 'tis once upon a time, in the days of yore, and in the land of Utopia, there was a dialogue between an oak and a cedar: whereas the Atheist is so impudently silly, as to bring the farce of his atoms upon the theatre of the present age; to make dull senseless matter transact all public and private affairs, by sea and by land, in houses of parliament, and closets of princes. Can any credulity be comparable to this? If a man should affirm, that an ape, casually meeting with pen, ink, and paper, and falling to scribble, did happen to write exactly the *Leviathan* of Thomas Hobbes, would an Atheist believe such a story? And yet he can easily digest as incredible as that; that the innumerable members of a human body, which, in the style of the Scripture, *are all written in the book of God*,[1] and may admit of almost infinite variations and transpositions above the twenty-four* letters of the alphabet, were at first fortuitously scribbled, and by mere accident compacted into this beautiful, and noble, and most wonderfully useful frame, which we now see it carry. But this will be the argument of my next discourse, which is the second proposition drawn from the text, that the admirable structure of human bodies, whereby they are fitted to live, and move, and be vitally informed by the soul, is unquestionably the workmanship of a most wise, and powerful, and beneficent Maker: *to which Almighty Creator, together with the Son and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, and glory, and majesty, and power, both now and from henceforth evermore.* Amen.

[1] Psal. cxxxix. 16.

[* twenty-four; 1*st ed.* "four and twenty."—D.]

A

CONFUTATION OF ATHEISM

FROM THE

STRUCTURE AND ORIGIN OF HUMAN BODIES.

PART I.

SERMON III.

Preached May the 2d, 1692.

ACTS, xvii. 27.

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him; though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being.

I HAVE said enough in my last to shew the fitness and pertinency of the Apostle's discourse to the persons he addressed to; whereby it sufficiently appears that he was no *babbler*, as some of the Athenian rabble reproached him; not a σπερμολόγος, a busy prating fellow; as in another language they say, *sermones serere* and *rumores serere*,[a] in a like mode of expression; that he did not talk at random; but was throughly acquainted with the several humours and opinions of his auditors. And, as *Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*, so it is manifest from this chapter alone, if nothing else had been now extant, that St. Paul was a great master in all the learning of the Greeks. One thing further I shall observe from the words of the text, before I enter upon the subject which I proposed, that it requires some

[a] Plautus, Virgil., Livius.

industry and consideration to find out the being of God; we must *seek the Lord*, and *feel after him*, before we can *find* him by the light of nature. The search indeed is not very tedious nor difficult; *he is not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being.* The consideration of our mind and understanding, which is an incorporeal substance independent from matter; and the contemplation of our own bodies, which have all the stamps and characters of excellent contrivance; these alone, though we look upon nothing abroad, do very easily and proximately guide us to the wise Author of all things. But however, as we see in* our text, some thought† and meditation are necessary to it; and a man may possibly be so stupid, or wilfully ignorant or perverse, as not to have *God in all his thoughts*, or to *say in his heart, There is none.* And this being observed, we have an effectual answer to that cavil of the Atheists, who make it an objection against the being of God, that they do not discover him without any application, in spite of their corrupt wills and debauched understandings. If, say they, such a God, as we are told of, had created and formed us, surely he would have left upon our minds a native and indelible inscription of himself, whereby we must needs have *felt* him, even without *seeking*, and believed in him whether we would or no. So that these Atheists, being conscious to themselves that they are void of such belief, which, they say, if God was, would actually and necessarily be in them, do bring their own wicked doubting and denying of God as evidence against his existence; and make their very infidelity an argument for itself. To which we reply, that God hath endowed‡ mankind with powers and abilities, which we call natural light, and reason, and common sense; by the due use of which we cannot miss of the discovery of his being; and this is sufficient. But, as to that original notion and proposition, GOD IS, which the Atheist pretends

[* in; 1*st ed.* "from."—D.]
[† thought; *so* 1*st ed.*; *ed.* 1735. "thoughts."—D.]
[‡ endowed; 1*st ed.* "endued."—D.]

should have been actually imprinted* on us, antecedently to all use of our faculties; we may affirm, that† the absence of such a notion doth not give the least presumption against the truth of religion; because, though God be supposed to be, yet that notion, distinct from our faculties, would not be requisite; nor is it asserted by‡ religion. *First*, it would not be requisite; because, without any such primitive impression, we can easily attain to the knowledge of the Deity by the sole use of our natural reason. And again, such an impression would have rendered the belief of a God irresistible and necessary, and thereby have bereaved it of all that is good and acceptable in it. For as the§ taking away the freedom of human will, and making us mere machines under fatal ties and impulses, would‖ destroy the very nature of moral virtue; so likewise, as to faith, there would be nothing worthy of praise and recompense in it, if there were left no possibility of doubting and¶ denying. And *secondly*, such a radical truth, GOD** IS, springing up together with the essence of the soul, and previous to all other thoughts, is not asserted by†† religion. No such thing, that I know of, is affirmed or suggested by the Scriptures. There are several topics there used against the atheism and idolatry of the heathens; such as the visible marks of divine wisdom and goodness in the works of the creation, the vital union of souls with matter, and the admirable structure of animate bodies, and the like. But, if our Apostle had asserted such an anticipating principle engraven upon our souls before all exercise of reason, what did he talk of *seeking the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him?* since,‡‡ if the

[* that original notion and proposition, GOD IS, which the Atheist pretends should have been actually imprinted; 1*st ed.* "any other original notion and proposition, that *God is*, actually imprinted."—D.]

[† affirm, that; 1*st ed.* "affirm against the Atheists, that."—D.]

[‡ asserted by; 1*st ed.* "pretended to by."—D.]

[§ the; 1*st ed.* "by."—D.]

[‖ would; 1*st ed.* "it would."—D.]

[¶ and; 1*st ed.* "or."—D.]

[** GOD; 1*st ed.* "that God."—D.]

[†† asserted by; 1*st ed.* "pretended to by."—D.]

[‡‡ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]

knowledge of him was in that manner innate and perpetual, there would be no occasion of *seeking*, nor any *hap* or hazard in the finding. Such an inscription would be self-evident without reasoning* or study, and could not fail constantly to exert its energy in their minds. What did he talk of the *Unknown God*, and *ignorantly worshipping?* when, if such an original signature were always inherent in their hearts, God could not be unknown to, or ignorantly worshipped by any. That primary proposition would have been clear, and distinct, and efficacious, and universal in the minds of men. St. Paul, therefore, it appears, had no apprehension of such a first notion, nor made use of it for an argument; which (since† whosoever hath it, must needs know that he hath it) if it be not believed before by the adversary, is false; and, if it be believed, is superfluous; and is of so frail and brittle a texture, that, whereas other arguments are not answered by bare denying without contrary proof, the mere doubting and disbelieving of this must be granted to be *ipso facto* the breaking and confuting of it. Thus much, therefore, we have proved against the Atheists;‡ that such an original irresistible notion is neither requisite upon supposition of a Deity, nor is pretended to by religion; so that neither the absence of it is any argument against the being of God, nor a supposed false assertion of it an objection against the Scripture. 'Tis enough that all are furnished with such natural powers and capacities, that if they seriously reflect, if they *seek the Lord* with meditation and study, they cannot fail of *finding* and discovering him: whereby God is not *left without witness*, but the Atheist§ *without excuse*. And now I haste to the second proposition deduced from the text, and to the argument of the present discourse, that the original|| structure of human bodies, whereby they are fitted to live, and

[* reasoning; 1*st ed.* "any ratiocination."—D.]

[† since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]

[‡ Atheists; 1*st ed.* "Atheist."—D.]

[§ Atheist; 1*st ed.* "Atheists."—D.]

[|| and to the argument of the present discourse, that the original; 1*st ed.* "and the argument of my present discourse, that the organical."—D.]

move, and be vitally informed by the soul, is unquestionably the workmanship of a most wise, and powerful, and beneficent Maker.

First, 'tis allowed and acknowledged by all parties, that the bodies of men and other animals are excellently well fitted for life, and motion, and sensation; and the several parts of them well adapted and accommodated to their particular functions. The eye is very proper and meet for seeing, the tongue for tasting and speaking, the hand for holding and lifting, and ten thousand operations beside: and so for the inward parts; the lungs are suitable for respiration, the stomach for concoction, the lacteous vessels for the reception of the chyle, the heart for the distribution of the blood to all the parts of the body. This is matter of fact, and beyond all dispute; and in effect is no more than to say, that *animals are animals;* for, if they were deprived of these qualifications, they could not be so. This, therefore, is not the matter in question between us and the Atheists: but the controversy is here. We, when we consider so many constituent parts in the bodies of men, all admirably compacted into so noble an engine; in each of the very fingers, for example, there are bones, and gristles, and ligaments, and membranes, and muscles, and tendons, and nerves, and arteries, and veins, and skin, and cuticle, and nail; together with marrow, and fat, and blood, and other nutritious juices; and all those solid parts of a determinate size, and figure, and texture, and situation; and each of them made up of myriads of little fibres and filaments, not discoverable by the naked eye; I say, when we consider how innumerable parts must constitute so small a member as the finger, we cannot look upon it or the whole body, wherein appears so much fitness, and use, and subserviency to infinite functions, any otherwise than as the effect of contrivance and skill, and consequently the workmanship of a most intelligent and beneficent Being. And though now the propagation of mankind be* in a settled method of

[* be; 1*st ed.* "is."—D.]

nature, which is the instrument* of God, yet we affirm that the first production of mankind was† by the immediate power of the almighty Author of nature; and that all succeeding generations of men are the progeny of one primitive couple. This is a religious man's account of the frame and origination of himself. Now, the Atheists agree with us, as to the fitness of man's body and its several parts to their various operations and functions (for that is visible and past all contradiction); but they vehemently oppose,‡ and horribly dread the thought, that this usefulness of the parts and the whole should first arise from wisdom and design. So that here will be the point in debate, and the subject of our present undertaking; whether this acknowledged fitness of human bodies must be attributed, as we say, to a wise and good God; or, as the Atheists aver, to dead senseless matter. They have contrived several tricks and *methods of deceit*,[b] one repugnant to another, to evade, if possible, this most cogent proof of a Deity; all which I will propose and refute: and I hope to make it appear, that here, as indeed every where, but here certainly, in the great dramatic poem of Nature, is *dignus Deo vindice nodus*, a necessity of introducing a God.

And first, I will answer what exceptions they can have against our account: and secondly, I will confute all the reasons and explications they can give of their own.

1. *First*, I will answer what exceptions they can have against our account of the production of mankind. And they may object, that the body itself, though pretty good in its kind and upon their hypothesis, nevertheless doth not look like the workmanship of so great a Master as is pretended by us: that infinite Wisdom, and Goodness, and Power, would have bestowed upon us more senses than five,

[* nature, which is the instrument; 1*st ed.* "nature, the instrument."—D.]

[† the first production of mankind was; 1*st ed.* "its first production was."—D.]

[‡ oppose; 1*st ed.* "impugn."—D.]

[b] Μεθοδείας τῆς πλάνης, Eph. iv. 14.

or at least these five in a much higher perfection; that we could never have come out of the hands of the Almighty so subject to numerous diseases, so obnoxious to violent deaths; and, at best, of such a short and transitory life. They can no more ascribe so sorry an effect to an omniscient cause, than some ordinary piece of clock-work, with a very few motions and uses, and those continually out of order, and quickly at an end, to the best artist of the age. But to this we reply: *first*, as to the five senses, it would be rash indeed to affirm, that God, if* he had pleased, could not have endued us with more. But thus much we may aver, that though the power of God be infinite and perfect, yet the capacities of matter are within limits and bounds. Why then doth the Atheist suspect that there may possibly be any more ways of sensation than what we have already? Hath he an† idea, or notion, or discovery of any more? So far from that, that he cannot make any addition or progress in those very senses he hath, further than they themselves have informed him. He cannot imagine one new colour, or taste, or smell, beside those that have actually fallen under his senses.‡ Much less can he that is destitute of an entire sense have any idea or representation of it; as one that is born deaf hath no notion of sounds; or blind, of colours and light. If then the Atheist can have no imagination of more senses than five, why doth he suppose that a body is capable of more? If we had double or triple as many, there might still be the same suspicion for a greater number without end; and the objection therefore in both cases is§ equally unreasonable and groundless. *Secondly*, we affirm, that our senses have that degree of perfection which is most fit and suitable to our estate and condition. For, though the *eye* were so piercing as to descry even opake and little objects some hundreds of leagues off, even that improvement of our sight

[* if; 1*st ed.* "though."—D.] [† an; 1*st ed.* "any."—D.]

[‡ his senses; 1*st ed.* "his respective senses."—D.]

[§ and the objection therefore in both cases is; 1*st ed.* "and therefore in both cases 'tis."—D.]

would do us little service;* it would be terminated by neighbouring hills and woods; or, in the largest and evenest plain, by the very convexity of the earth; unless we could always inhabit the tops of mountains and cliffs, or had wings too to fly aloft, when we had a mind to take a prospect. And if mankind had had wings (as perhaps some extravagant Atheist may think us deficient in that), all the world must have consented to clip them; or else human race had been extinct before this time, nothing, upon that supposition, being safe from murder and rapine. Or, if the *eye*† were so acute as to rival the finest microscopes, and to discern the smallest hair upon the leg of a gnat, it would be a curse, and not a blessing to us; it would make all things appear rugged and deformed; the most finely polished crystal would be uneven

[* For, though the *eye* . . . . . do us little service; 1*st ed.* "If the *eye* were so piercing, as to descry even opake and little objects a hundred leagues off, it would do us little service."—D.]

[† "There is another part of these Sermons remarkable, as apparently containing the germ of two well-known passages in the works of Bentley's most bitter satirists. '*If the eye were so acute as to rival the finest microscopes,* . . . . . *the tenderness of a wound.*'

> '*Why has not man a microscopic eye?*
> For this plain reason, man is not a fly.
> Say what the use, were finer optics given,
> T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heaven?
> Or touch, if *tremblingly alive all o'er,*
> *To smart and agonize at every pore?*
> Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,
> Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
> If nature *thunder'd in his opening ears,*
> And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres;
> How would he wish that heaven had left him still
> The whisp'ring zephyr and the purling rill!'
>
> [POPE, *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. v. 193.]

How exquisitely has the poet wrought out the coarse and strong material of the divine into his own fine and diaphanous texture! And in one sentence of the above quotation, do we not find the thought, and almost the expressions, of the humorous, but not over-cleanly, passage in Gulliver's Travels, which describes the effect of the persons of the Brobdignagian maids of honour on the acute eyesight of Grildrig?"—*Quarterly Review*, vol. xlvi. p. 128, 9.

But both Bentley and Pope were indebted to Locke: see *Essay concerning Hum. Understand.* b. ii. ch. 23. sect. 12: vol. i. p. 255. ed. 1760.—D.]

and rough; the sight of our own selves would affright us; the smoothest skin would be beset all over with ragged scales and bristly hairs; and besides,* we could not see at one view above what is now the space of an inch, and it would take a considerable time to survey the then mountainous bulk of our own bodies. Such a faculty of sight, so disproportioned to our other senses and to the objects about us, would be very little better than blindness itself. And again, God hath furnished us with invention and industry, so that by optical glasses we can more than supply that imaginary defect of our own eyes, and discover more remote and minute bodies with that assistance, than perhaps the most whimsical Atheist would desire to do without it. So likewise if our sense of *hearing* were exalted proportionally† to the former, what a miserable condition would mankind be in! What whisper could be low enough, but many would overhear it? What affairs, that most require it, could be transacted with secrecy? And whither could we retire from perpetual humming and buzzing? Every breath of wind would incommode and disturb us: we should have no quiet or sleep in the silentest nights and most solitary places; and we must inevitably be struck‡ deaf or dead with the noise of a clap of thunder. And the like inconveniences would follow if the sense of *feeling* was advanced to such a degree as the Atheist requires. How could we sustain the pressure of our very clothes in such a condition; much less carry burdens, and provide for conveniences of life? We could not bear the assault of an insect, or a feather, or a puff of air, without pain. There are examples now of wounded persons, that have roared for anguish and torment at the discharge of ordnance, though at a very great distance: what insupportable torture then should we be under upon a like concussion in the air, when all the whole body would have the tenderness of a wound! In a word, all the changes and emenda-

[* besides; 1*st ed.* "beside."—D.]
[† proportionally; 1*st ed.* "proportionably."—D.]
[‡ struck; 1*st ed.* "stricken."—D.]

tions that the Atheists would make in our senses are so far from being improvements, that they would prove the utter ruin and extirpation of mankind.

But perhaps they may have better success in their complaints about the distempers of the body, and the shortness of life. We do not wonder indeed that the Atheist should lay a mighty stress upon this objection; for to a man, that places all his happiness in the indolency and pleasure of body,* what can be more terrible than pain, or a fit of sickness? nothing but death alone, the most dreadful thing in the world. When an Atheist reflects upon death, his very hope is despair; and 'tis the crown and top of his wishes, that it may prove his utter dissolution and destruction. No question, if an Atheist had had the making of himself, he would have framed a constitution that could have kept pace with his insatiable lust, been invincible by gluttony and intemperance, and have held out vigorous a thousand years in a perpetual debauch. But we answer: first, in the words of St. Paul; *Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?*[z] We do adore† and magnify his most holy name for his undeserved mercy towards us, that he made us the chief of the visible creation; and freely acquit his goodness from any imputation of unkindness, that he has placed us no higher. Secondly, religion gives us a very good account of the present infirmity of our bodies. Man at his first origin was a vessel of honour, when he came first out of the hands of the potter, endued with all imaginable perfections of the animal nature, till by disobedience and sin diseases and death came first into the world. Thirdly, the distempers of the body are not so formidable to a religious man as they are to an Atheist: he hath a quite different judgment and apprehension about them; he is willing to believe, that our present condition is better for us in the

[* of body; 1*st ed.* "of the body."—D.]

[z] Rom. ix. 20.

[† We do adore; 1*st ed.* "We adore."—D.]

issue than that uninterrupted health and security that the Atheist desires; which would strongly tempt us to forget God, and the concerns of a better life. Whereas now he receives a fit of sickness as the παιδεία τοῦ πατρὸς, the kind chastisement and discipline of his heavenly Father, to wean his affections from the world, where he is but as on a journey; and to fix his thoughts and desires on things above, where his country and his dwelling is; that, where he hath placed his *treasure* and concerns, *there his heart may be also*. Fourthly, most of the distempers that are incident to us are of our own making, the effects of abused plenty, and luxury, and must not be charged upon our Maker; who, out of the abundant riches* of his compassion, hath provided for us a store† of excellent medicines, to alleviate in a great measure those very evils which we bring upon ourselves. And now we are come to the last objection of the Atheist, that life is too short. Alas for him, what pity 'tis that he cannot wallow immortally in his sensual pleasures! But, if‡ his life were many whole ages longer than it is, he would still make the same complaint, *brevis est hic fructus homullis*;[a] for eternity, and that's the thing he trembles at, is every whit as long after a thousand years as after fifty. But religion gives us a better prospect, and makes us look beyond the gloomy regions of death with comfort and delight; *when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality*. We are so far from repining at God, that he hath not extended the period of our lives to the longevity of the antediluvians, that we give him thanks for contracting the days of our trial, and receiving us more maturely into those everlasting habitations above, that he hath prepared for us.

And now that I have answered all the Atheists' exceptions against our account of the production of mankind, I

[* who, out of the abundant riches; 1*st ed.* "who notwithstanding out of the riches."—D.]

[† a store; 1*st ed.* "store."—D.]

[‡ But, if; 1*st ed.* "If."—D.]

[a] Lucret. l. iii. [v. 927.—D.]

come, in the next place, to examine all the reasons and explications they can give of their own.

The Atheists upon this occasion are divided into sects, and (which is the mark and character of error) are at variance and repugnancy with each other and with themselves. Some of them will have mankind to have been thus from all eternity. But the rest do not approve of* infinite successions, but are positive for a beginning; and they also are subdivided into three parties: the first ascribe the origin of men to the influence of the stars upon some extraordinary conjunction or aspect: others again reject all astrology; and some of these mechanically produce mankind, at the very first experiment, by the action of the sun upon duly prepared matter: but others are† of opinion, that after infinite blundering and miscarrying, our bodies at last came into‡ this figure by mere chance and accident. There's no Atheist in the world, that reasons about his infidelity, (which, God knows, most of them never do,) but he takes one of these four methods. I will refute them every one in the same order that I have named them: the two former in the present discourse, reserving the others for another occasion.

I. And first, the opinion of those Atheists that will have mankind and other animals to have subsisted eternally§ in infinite generations already past, will be found to be flat nonsense and contradiction to itself, and repugnant also to matter of fact. First, it is contradiction to itself. Infinite generations of men, they say, are already past and gone. But whatsoever is now past was once actually present; so that each of those infinite generations was once in its turn actually present: therefore all except one generation were once future and not in being, which destroys the very supposition: for either that one generation must itself have been infinite, which is nonsense; or it was the finite beginning of

[* of; 1st ed. "of any."—D.]
[† are of; 1st ed. "are rather of."—D.]
[‡ came into; 1st ed. "happened and jumped into."—D.]
[§ eternally; 1st ed. "thus eternally."—D.]

infinite generations between itself and us, that* is infinity terminated at both ends, which is nonsense as before. Again, infinite past generations of men have been once actually present: there may be some one man, suppose then, that was† at infinite distance from us now; therefore that man's son likewise, forty years younger suppose than‡ his father, was either at infinite distance from us, or at finite: if that son too was at infinite distance from us, then one infinite is longer by forty years than another, which is absurd: if at finite, then forty years added to finite makes it infinite, which is as absurd as the other. And again, the number of men that are already dead and gone is infinite, as they say: but the number of the eyes of those men must necessarily be twice as much as that of the men themselves, and that of the fingers ten times as much, and that of the hairs of their heads thousands of times. So that we have here one infinite number twice, ten times, and thousands of times as great as another, which is contradiction again. Thus we see it is impossible in itself that any successive duration should be actually and positively infinite, or have infinite successions already gone and past. Neither can these difficulties be applied to the eternal duration of God Almighty. For, though we cannot comprehend eternity and infinity, yet we understand what they are not. And something, we are sure, must have existed from all eternity; because all things could not emerge and start out of nothing. So that if this pre-existent eternity is not compatible with a successive duration, as we clearly and distinctly perceive that it is not, then it remains, that some Being, though infinitely above our finite comprehensions, must have an§ identical, invariable continuance from all eternity; which Being is no other than God.

[* that; 1*st ed.* "which."—D.]

[† there may be some one man, suppose then, that was; 1*st ed.* "therefore there may be some one man of them given, that was."—D.]

[‡ forty years younger suppose than; 1*st ed.* "suppose forty years younger than."—D.]

[§ have an; 1*st ed.* "have had an."—D.]

For, as his nature is perfect and immutable, without the *least shadow of change*, so his eternal duration is permanent and indivisible, not measurable by time and motion, nor to be computed by number of successive moments: *one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

And, secondly, this opinion of infinite generation* is repugnant likewise to matter of fact. 'Tis a truth beyond opposition, that the universal species of mankind hath had a gradual increase, notwithstanding what war, and famine, and pestilence, and floods, and conflagrations, and the religious profession of celibacy, and other causes, may at certain periods of time have interrupted and retarded it. This is manifest from the history of the Jewish nation, from the account of the Roman census, and registers of our own country,[b] where the proportions† of births to burials is found upon observation to be yearly as fifty to forty. Now, if mankind do increase, though never so slowly, but one couple suppose in an age, 'tis enough to evince the falsehood of infinite generations already expired. For though an Atheist should contend, that there were ten thousand million couple of mankind now in being, (that we may allow him multitude enough,) 'tis but going back so many ages, and we descend to a single original pair. And 'tis all one in respect of eternal duration yet behind, whether we begin the world so many millions of ages ago, or date it from the late era of about six thousand years. And moreover this recent beginning of the world is further established from the known original of empires and kingdoms, and the invention of arts and sciences: whereas, if infinite ages of mankind had already preceded, there could nothing have been left to be invented or improved by the successful industry and curiosity of our own. The circulation of the blood, and the weight and spring of the air, (which is as it were the vital pulse and the great circulation

[* generation; 1*st ed.* "generations."—D.]

[b] Vide Observations upon the Bills of Mortality.

[† proportions; 1*st ed.* "proportion."—D.]

of nature, and of more importance in all physiology than any one invention since the beginning of science,) had never lain hid* so many myriads of generations, and been reserved for a late happy discovery by two great luminaries† of this island. I know the Atheist may endeavour to evade this, by supposing, that, though mankind have been from everlasting, and have perpetually increased by generation, yet at certain great periods there may be universal deluges, which may not wholly extinguish mankind, (for, they'll say, there is not water enough in nature for that,) but may cover the earth to such a height, that none but a few mountaineers may escape, enough to continue human race; and yet, being illiterate rustics (as mountaineers always are), they can preserve no memoirs of former times, nor propagate any sciences or arts; and so the world must needs be thought by posterity to have begun at such periods. But to this I answer, first, that upon this supposition there must have been infinite deluges already past: for if ever this Atheist admits of a first deluge, he is in the same noose that he was. For then he must assert, that there were infinite generations and an infinite increase of mankind before that first deluge; and then the earth could not receive them, but the infinite bodies of men must occupy an infinite space, and then all the matter of the universe must be human body; and many other absurdities will follow, absurdities as infinite as the generations he talks of. But if‡ he says, that there have been infinite deluges heretofore, this is impossibility again; for all that I said before against the notion of infinite past generations, is alike applicable to this. Secondly, such universal deluges (since§ the Deity is now excluded) must be produced in a natural way; and therefore gradually, and not in an instant; and therefore (because the tops of mountains, they say, are never over-

[* hid; 1*st ed.* "hidden."—D.] [† Harvey and Boyle.—D.]

[‡ and many other absurdities will follow, absurdities as infinite as the generations he talks of. But if; 1*st ed.* "and other absurdities that follow it, which are infinite too. But if."—D.]

[§ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.]

flown,) the civilised people may escape thither out of villages and cities; and consequently, against the Atheist, arts, and sciences, and histories, may be preserved, and derived to the succeeding world. Thirdly, let us imagine the whole terraqueous globe with its atmosphere about it; what is there here that can naturally effect an universal deluge? If you would drown one country or continent with rains and inundations, you must borrow your vapour and water from some other part of the globe. You can never overflow all at a time. If the atmosphere itself was reduced into water, as some think it possible, it would not make an orb above thirty-two foot deep, which would soon be swallowed up by the cavity of the sea and the depressed parts of the earth, and be a very feeble attempt towards an universal deluge. But then what immense weight is there above, that must overcome the expansive force of the air, and compress it into near the thousandth part of the room that it now takes up? We, that acknowledge a God Almighty, can give an account of one deluge, by saying it was miraculous; but it would be strange* to see an Atheist have recourse to a miracle; and that not once only, but upon infinite occasions. But perhaps they may endeavour to prove the possibility of such a natural deluge by borrowing an ingenious notion, and pretending that the face of nature may be now quite changed from what it was; and that formerly the whole collection of waters might be an orbicular abyss, arched over with an exterior crust or shell of earth, and that the breaking and fall of this crust might naturally make a deluge. I'll allow the Atheist all the fair play in the world. Let us suppose the fall of this imaginary crust. First, it seems to be impossible but that all the inhabitants of this crust must be dashed to pieces in its ruins: so that this very notion brings us to the necessity of a new production of men; to evade which it is introduced by the Atheist. Again, if such a crust naturally fell, then it had in its own constitution a tendency towards a fall;

[* be strange; 1*st ed.* "be a little strange."—D.]

that is, it was more likely and inclinable to fall this thousand years than* the last. But, if the crust was always gradually nearer and nearer to falling, that plainly evinces that it had not endured eternally before its fall. For, let them assign any imaginable period for its falling, how could it have held out till then (according to the supposition) the unmeasurable duration of infinite ages before? And again, such a crust could fall but once; for what architect can an Atheist suppose to rebuild a new arch out of the ruins of the other? But I have shewn before that this Atheist hath need of infinite deluges to effect his design; and therefore I'll leave him to contrive how to make infinite crusts one upon the back of another; and now proceed to examine, in the second place, the astrological explication of the origin of men.

II. If you ask one of this party, what evidence he is able to produce for the truth of his art, he may perhaps offer some physical reasons for a general influence of the stars upon terrestrial bodies; but, as astrology is considered to be† a system of rules and propositions, he will not pretend to give any reason of it *a priori;* but resolves all that into tradition from the Chaldeans and Egyptians, who first learnt it by long observation, and transmitted it down to posterity; and that now it is daily confirmed by events which are experienced to answer the predictions. This is all that can be said for astrology as an art. So that the whole credibility of this planetary production of mankind must depend upon observation. But are they able to shew among all the Chaldaic‡ observations for four hundred and seventy thousand years (as they pretended) any tradition of such a production? So far from that, that the Chaldeans believed the world and mankind to have been from everlasting, which opinion I have refuted before. Neither can the Egyptian wizards, with their long catalogue of dynasties, and observations for innumerable years, supply the Atheists with one instance of such a crea-

[* years than; 1*st ed.* "years, suppose, than."—D.]
[† to be; 1*st ed.* "as."—D.]
[‡ the Chaldaic; 1*st ed.* "the remains of the Chaldaic."—D.]

tion. Where are the fragments of Petosiris and Necepso that may countenance this assertion? I believe, if they had had any example of men born out of the soil, they would rather have ascribed it to the fruitful mud of the Nile[c] (as they did the breeding of frogs, and mice, and monsters) than to the efficacy of stars. But, with the leave of these fortune-tellers, did the stars do this feat once only, which gave beginning to human race? or have they frequently done so, and may do it again? If frequently, why is not this rule delivered in Ptolemy and Albumazar? If once only, at the beginning, then how came it to be discovered? Who were there then in the world to observe the births of those first men, and calculate their nativities, as they sprawled out of ditches? Those sons of earth were very wise children, if they themselves knew that the stars were their fathers; unless we are to imagine that they understood the planets and the zodiac by instinct, and fell to drawing schemes of their own horoscopes in the same dust they sprung out of? For my part, I can have no great veneration for Chaldaic antiquity, when I see they could not discover in so many thousand years that the moon was an opaque body, and received her light from the sun.[d] But, suppose their observations had been never so accurate, it could add no authority to modern astrology, which is borrowed from the Greeks. 'Tis well known that Berosus, or his scholars, new modelled and adapted the Babylonian doctrines to the Grecian mythology. The supposed influences of Aries and Taurus, for example, have a manifest relation to the Grecian stories of the ram

[c] So Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. cap. 2. *Φασὶ τοίνυν Αἰγύπτιοι κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς τῶν ὅλων γένεσιν πρώτους τοὺς ἀνθρώπους γενέσθαι κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον, διά τε τὴν εὐκρασίαν τῆς χώρας, καὶ διὰ τὴν φύσιν τοῦ Νείλου,* &c. [t. i. p. 13. ed. Wessel.—D.]

[d] Vitruvius, lib. ix. cap. 4. Lucret. lib. v. Ut Babylonica Chaldæam doctrina, &c. [v. 726. In 1*st ed.* Bentley gives "Chaldæum:" and see his *Epist. ad Mill.* vol. ii. p. 295.—D.] Apuleius de Deo Socratis: Seu illa (luna) proprio et perpeti fulgore, ut Chaldæi arbitrantur, parte luminis compos, parte altera cassa fulgoris. [Sive illa proprio seu perpeti candore, &c.: vide Appuleii *Opp.* t. ii. p. 117. ed. Ouden.—D.]

that carried Phrixus, and the bull that carried Europa. Now which of these is the copy, and which the original? Were the fables taken from the influences, or the influences from the fables? the poetical fables more ancient than all records of history; or the astrological influences, that were not known to the Greeks till after Alexander the Great? But, without question, those fabulous tales had been many a time told and sung to lull children asleep, before ever Berosus set up his intelligence-office at Cos.* And the same may be said of all the other constellations. First, poetry had filled the skies with asterisms and histories belonging to them; and then astrology devises the feigned virtues and influences of each, from some property of the image, or allusion to the story. And the same trifling futility appears in their twelve signs of the zodiac, and their mutual relations and aspects. Why no more aspects than diametrically opposite, and such as make equilateral figures? Why are the masculine and feminine, the fiery and airy, and watery and earthly† signs all placed at such regular distances? Were the virtues of the stars disposed in that order and rank on purpose only to make a pretty diagram upon paper? But the atheistical astrologer is doubly pressed with this absurdity. For, if there was no counsel at the making of the world, how came the asterisms of the same nature and energies to be so harmoniously placed at regular intervals? and how could all the stars of one asterism agree and conspire together to constitute an universal? Why does not every single star shed a separate influence, and have aspects with other stars of their own constellation? But what need there many words? as if the late discoveries of the celestial bodies had not plainly detected the imposture of astrology? The planet Saturn is found to have a great ring that encircles him, and five‡ lesser planets that move about him, as the moon doth about the earth: and Jupiter hath four satellites, which by their inter-

[* Cos; 1*st ed.* "Coos."—D.]
[† earthly; 1*st ed.* "earthy."—D.]
[‡ five; 1*st ed.* "three."—D.]

position between him and us make some hundreds of eclipses every year. Now the whole tribe of astrologers, that never dreamed of these planets, have always declared, that when Jupiter and Saturn come about again to any given point, they exert (considered singly by themselves) the same influence as before. But 'tis now manifest, that when either of them return to the same point, the planets about them, that must make up an united influence with them, have a different situation in respect of us and each other from what they had the time before; and consequently the joint influence must be perpetually varied, and never be reducible to any rules and observations. Or, if the influences be conveyed hither distinct, yet sometimes some of the little planets will eclipse the great one at any given point, and by that means* intercept and obstruct the influence. I cannot now insist on many other arguments deducible from the late improvements of astronomy, and the truth of the Copernican system;† for, if the earth be not the centre of the planetary motions, what must become then of the present astrology, which is wholly adapted to that vulgar hypothesis? And yet nevertheless, when they lay under such wretched mistakes for many myriads of years, if we are willing to believe them, they would all along, as now, appeal to experience and event for the confirmation of their doctrines. That's the invincible demonstration of the verity of the science. And indeed, as to their predictions, I think our astrologers may assume to themselves that infallible oracle of Tiresias,

O Laërtiade, quicquid dico, aut erit, aut non.‡

There's but a true and a false in any telling of fortune; and a man that never hits on the right side cannot be called a bad guesser, but must miss out of design, and be notably skilful at lighting on the wrong. And were there not formerly as great pretensions to it from the superstitious obser-

[* by that means; 1*st ed.* "therefore."—D.]
[† and the truth of the Copernican system; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]
[‡ Hor. *Serm.* ii. 5. 59. Eds. . . . . *dicam* . . . .—D.]

vation of the entrails of cows, of the flying of vultures, and the pecking of chickens? Nay, the old augurs and soothsayers had better reason to profess the art of divining than the modern astrological Atheist; for they supposed there were some demons that directed the indications. So likewise the Chaldean and Egyptian astrologers were much more excusable than he. It was the religion of their countries to worship the stars, as we know from unquestionable authority. They believed them intelligent beings, and no other than very gods;[e] and therefore had some reason to suspect that they might govern human affairs. The influence of the stars was in their apprehensions no less than divine power. But an Atheist, that believes the planets to be dark, solid, and senseless bodies, like the brute earth he treads on; and the fixed stars and the sun to be inanimate balls of fire; what reasons can he advance for the credit of such influences? he acknowledgeth nothing besides matter and motion; so that all that he can conceive to be transmitted hither from the stars must needs be performed either by mechanism or accident; either of which is wholly unaccountable, and the latter irreconcilable to any art or system of science. But, if both were allowed the Atheist, yet, as to any production of mankind, they will be again refuted in my following discourse. I can preserve a due esteem for some great men of the last age, before the mechanical philosophy was revived, though they were too much addicted to this nugatory art. When occult quality, and sympathy and antipathy, were admitted for satisfactory explications of things, even wise and virtuous men might swallow down any opinion that was countenanced by antiquity. But at this time of day, when all the general powers and capacities of matter are so clearly understood, he must be very ridiculous himself that doth not deride and explode the antiquated folly. But we may see the miserable

[e] Maimonides, More Nevochim de Zabiis et Chaldæis. Plato in Cratylo. Diodorus, lib. i. cap. 2. Eusebius, Demonst. [Præpar.] Evangel. lib. i. c. 6. *Φοίνικας τοιγαροῦν καὶ Αἰγυπτίους πρώτους ἁπάντων κατέχει λόγος ἥλιον καὶ σελήνην καὶ ἀστέρας Θεοὺς ἀποφῆναι.*

shifts that some men are put to, when that which was first founded upon, and afterwards supported by *idolatry*, is now become the tottering sanctuary of *Atheism*: if the stars be no deities, astrology is groundless; and if the stars be deities, why is the astrologer an Atheist? He may easily be no Christian; and 'tis difficult, indeed, to be both at once: because, as I have said before, idolatry is at the bottom; and by submitting human actions and inclinations to the influence of the stars, they destroy the very essence of moral virtue, and the efficacy of divine grace; and therefore astrology was justly condemned by the ancient fathers and Christian emperors.[f] An astrologer, I say, may very easily be no Christian; he may be an idolater or a pagan: but I could hardly think astrology to be compatible with rank atheism, if I could suppose any great gifts of nature to be in that person who is either an Atheist or an astrologer. But,* let him be what he will, he is not able to do much hurt by his reasons and example; for religion itself, according to his principles, is derived from the stars. And he owns, 'tis not any just exceptions he hath taken against it,† but 'tis his destiny and fate: 'tis Saturn in the ninth house, and not judgment and deliberation, that made him an Atheist.

[f] Concil. Laod. can. 36. Conc. 6. in Trullo, can. 61. Cod. Just. lib. ix. tit. 18. Cod. Theodos. lib. ix. tit. 16. Βασιλικῶν lib. lx. tit. 39.

[* to be in that person who is either an Atheist or an astrologer. But; 1*st ed.* "to be where either do reside. But."—D.]

[† it; 1*st ed.* "Christianity."—D.]

A

CONFUTATION OF ATHEISM

FROM THE

STRUCTURE AND ORIGIN OF HUMAN BODIES.

PART II.

SERMON IV.

Preached June the 6th, 1692.

ACTS, xvii. 27.

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him; though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being.

IN the former part of this inquiry I have examined and refuted two atheistical notions opposed to the great* doctrine of the text, *that we owe our living and being to the power of God:* the one of the Aristotelian Atheists, who, to avoid the difficulties of the first production of mankind without the intervention of almighty wisdom and power, will have the race to have thus continued without beginning, by an eternal succession of infinite past generations; which assertion hath been detected to be mere nonsense, and contradictory to itself: the other of the astrological undertakers, that would raise men like vegetables out of some fat† and slimy soil, well digested by the kindly heat of the sun, and impregnated with the influence of the stars upon some remarkable and periodical conjunctions; which opinion hath been vamped up

[* great; 1*st ed.* "grand."—D.]

[† fat; *so* 1*st ed. and other eds.; ed. of* 1735. "flat."—D.]

of late by Cardan and Cesalpinus, and other newsmongers from the skies; a pretence as groundless and silly, as the dreaming oneirocritics of Artemidorus and Astrampsychus, or the modern chiromancy and divinations of gipsies.

I proceed now to the two remaining paradoxes of such sects of Atheists, as, laying aside astrology and the unintelligible influence of heavenly bodies, except that which proceeds from* their gravity, and heat, and light, do either produce mankind mechanically and necessarily from certain connexions of natural causes; or more dully and supinely, though altogether as reasonably, resolve the whole business into the unaccountable shuffles and tumults of matter, which they call chance and accident. But at present I shall only take an account of the supposed production of human bodies by mechanism and necessity.

The mechanical or corpuscular philosophy, though peradventure the oldest as well as the best in the world, had lain buried for many ages in contempt and oblivion, till it was happily restored and cultivated anew by some excellent wits of the present age.† But it principally owes its reestablishment and lustre to Mr. Boyle,‡ that honourable person of ever-blessed memory, who hath not only shewn its usefulness in physiology above the vulgar doctrines of real qualities and substantial forms, but likewise its great serviceableness to religion itself. And I think it hath been competently proved in a former discourse, how friendly it is to the immateriality of human souls, and consequently to the existence of a supreme spiritual Being. And I may have occasion hereafter to shew further, that all the powers of mechanism are entirely dependent on the Deity, and do afford a solid argument for the reality of his nature. So far am I from the apprehension of any great feats that this mechanical Atheist can do against religion. For, if we consider the phenomena of the§ material world with a due and serious attention, we

[* except that which proceeds from; 1*st ed.* " more than by."—D.]
[† age; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.] [‡ Mr. Boyle; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]
[§ the; 1*st ed.* " that."—D.]

shall plainly perceive, that its present frame and system, and all the* established laws of nature, are constituted and preserved by gravitation alone. That is the powerful cement which holds together this magnificent structure of the world, *which stretcheth the north over the empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing*;[a] if we may transfer the words of Job from the first and real cause to the secondary agent. Without gravity,† the whole universe, if we suppose an undetermined power of motion infused into matter, would have been a confused chaos, without beauty or order, and never stable and permanent in any condition. Now it may be proved, in its due place, that this gravity, the great basis of all mechanism, is not itself mechanical, but the immediate *fiat* and finger of God, and the execution of the divine law; and that bodies have not the power of tending towards a centre, either from other bodies or from themselves: which at once, if it be proved, will undermine and ruin all the towers and batteries that the Atheists have raised against heaven. For, if no compound body in the visible world can subsist and continue without gravity, and if‡ gravity do immediately flow from a divine power and energy, it will avail them nothing, though they should be able to explain all the particular effects, even the origination of animals, by mechanical principles. But, however, at present I will forbear to urge this against the Atheist. For, though I should allow him, that this catholic principle of gravitation is essential to matter without introducing a God; yet I will defy him to shew, how a human body could be at first produced naturally, according to the present system of things, and the mechanical affections of matter.

And because this Atheist professeth to believe as much as we, that the first production of mankind was in a quite different manner from the present and ordinary method of nature, and yet affirms nevertheless that that was natural

[* system, and all the; 1*st ed.* "constitution and the."—D.]

[a] Job, xxvi. 7. [† gravity; 1*st ed.* "that."—D.]

[‡ if; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

too, which seems at the first sight to be little less than a contradiction; it should lie upon him to make out, how matter by undirected motion could at first necessarily fall, without ever erring or miscarrying, into such a curious formation of human bodies; a thing that, by his own confession, it was never able to do since, or at least hath not done for some thousands of years: he should declare* to us what shape and contexture matter then had, which it cannot have now; how it came to be altered by long course of time, so that living men can no longer† be produced out of putrefaction in the primary way; and yet the species of mankind, that now consists of and is nourished by matter so altered, should continue to be the same as it was from the beginning. He should undertake to explain to us the first steps and the whole progress of such a formation; at least, by way of hypothesis, how it naturally might have been, though he affirm not‡ that it was actually so: whether he hath a new notion peculiar to himself about that production, or takes up with some old one, that is ready at hand: whether that most witty conceit of Anaximander,[b] that the first men and all animals were bred in some warm moisture, enclosed in crustaceous skins, as if they were§ various kinds of crabfish and lobsters; and so continued till they arrived‖ at perfect age, when their shelly prisons growing dry and breaking, made way for their liberty: or the no less ingenious opinion of the great Empedocles,[c] that mother earth first brought forth vast numbers of legs, and arms, and heads, and the other members of the body, scattered and distinct, and all at their full growth; which coming together and cementing, (as the

[* he should declare; 1st ed. "to declare."—D.]

[† longer; 1st ed. "more."—D.]

[‡ he affirm not; 1st ed. "he did not affirm."—D.]

[b] Plutarch. de Plac. Phil. lib. v. c. 19. et Sympos. l. viii. c. 8. Censorinus de Die Natali, cap. 4.

[§ as if they were; 1st ed. "as it were."—D.]

[‖ and so continued till they arrived; 1st ed. "and so they continued till they had arrived."—D.]

[c] Plutarch. de Plac. Phil. lib. v. cap. 19. Censorin. ibidem.

pieces of snakes and lizards are said* to do, if one cuts them asunder,) and so configuring themselves into human shape, made lusty proper men of thirty years age in an instant: or, rather, the divine doctrine of Epicurus and the Egyptians,[d] that there first grew up a sort of wombs, that had their roots in the earth, and attracted thence a kind of milk for the nourishment of the enclosed *fœtus*, which at the time of maturity broke through those membranes, and shifted for themselves. I say, he ought to acquaint us which of these he is for, or bring a new explication of his own; and not require us to prove the negative, that a spontaneous production of mankind, neither warranted by example, nor defended by reason, nevertheless may not *possibly* have been true. This is a very unreasonable demand, and we might justly put him off with such an answer as this: that there are several things which all men in their wits do disbelieve, and yet none but madmen will go about to disprove. But, to shew him how much we endeavour to satisfy and oblige him, I will venture once for his sake to incur the censure of some persons for being elaborately trifling; for, with respect to the most of mankind, such wretched absurdities are more wisely contemned than confuted; and to give them a serious answer may only make them look more considerable.

First, then, I take it for granted by him, that there were the same laws of motion, and the like general fabric of the earth, sea, and atmosphere, at the beginning of mankind, as there are at this day. For if any laws at first were once settled and constituted; like those of the Medes and Persians, they are never to be reversed. To violate and infringe them, is the same as what we call miracle, and doth not sound very philosophically out of the mouth of an Atheist. He must allow, therefore, that bodies were endowed with the same affections and tendencies then as ever since; and that if an *axe-head*[e] be supposed to float upon water, which is

[* are said; 1*st ed.* "have been said."—D.]

[d] Censorinus, ibid. Lucret. lib. v. Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. cap. 2.

[e] 2 Kings, vi. 5.

specifically much lighter than it, it had been supernatural at that time, as well as in the days of Elisha. And this is all I* desire him to acknowledge at present. So that he may admit of those arguments as valid and conclusive against his hypothesis, that are fairly drawn from the present powers of matter, and the visible constitution of the world.

Now, that we may come to the point; all matter is either fluid or solid, in a large acceptation of the words, that they may comprehend even all the middle degrees between extreme fixedness and coherency, and the most rapid intestine motion of the particles of bodies. Now, the most cavilling Atheist must allow, that a solid inanimate body, while it remains in that state, where there is none or a very small and inconsiderable change of texture, is wholly incapable of a vital production. So that the first human body, without parents and without creator,† if such an one ever was, must have naturally been produced in and constituted by a fluid. And because this Atheist goes mechanically to work, the universal laws of fluids must have been rigidly observed during the whole process of the formation. Now this is a catholic rule of statics,[f] that if any body be bulk for bulk heavier than a fluid, it will sink to the bottom of that fluid, and if lighter, it will float upon it; having part of itself extant, and part immersed to such a determinate depth, as that so much of the fluid as is equal in bulk to the immersed part be equal in gravity to the whole: and consequently, if several portions of one and the same fluid have a different specific gravity, the heavier will always (in a free vessel) be gradually the lower, unless violently shaken and blended together by external concussion. But that cannot be in our present case. For I am unwilling to affront this Atheist so much, as to suppose him to believe, that the first organical body might possibly be effected in some fluid portion of matter, while its heterogeneous parts were jumbled and confounded together by a

[* all I; 1*st ed.* "all that I."—D.] [† creator; 1*st ed.* "a creator."—D.]

[f] Archimedes de Insidentibus Humido, lib. i. Stevin, des Elémens Hydrostatiques.

storm, or hurricane, or earthquake. To be sure he will rather have the primitive man to be produced by a long process in a kind of digesting *balneum*, where all the heavier lees may have time to subside, and a due *æquilibrium* be maintained, not disturbed by any such rude and violent shocks,* that would ruffle and break all the little *stamina* of the *embryon*, if it were a-making before. Now, because all the parts of an undisturbed fluid are either of equal gravity, or gradually placed and storied according to the differences of it, any concretion that can be supposed to be naturally and mechanically made in such a fluid, must have a like structure of its several parts; that is, either be all over of a similar gravity, or have the more ponderous parts nearer to its basis. But there need no more concessions than this to extinguish these supposed first-born of nature in their very formation. For, suppose a human body to be a-forming in such a fluid in any imaginable posture, it will never be reconcilable to this hydrostatical law. There will be always something lighter beneath, and something heavier above; because bone, or what is then the stuff and rudiments of bone, the heaviest *in specie*, will be ever in the midst. Now, what can make the heavier particles of bone ascend above the lighter ones of flesh, or depress these below those, against the tendency of their own nature? This would be wholly as miraculous as the swimming of iron in water at the command of Elisha; and as impossible to be, as that the lead of an edifice should naturally and spontaneously mount up to the roof, while lighter materials employ themselves beneath it; or that a statue, like that in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, whose head was of fine and most ponderous gold, and his feet of lighter materials,† iron and clay, should mechanically erect itself upon them for its basis.

Secondly, because this Atheist goes mechanically to work, he will not offer to affirm, that all the parts of the *embryon*

[* shocks; 1*st ed.* "shogs."—D.]
[† lighter materials; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

could, according to his explication, be formed at a time. This would be a supernatural thing, and an effectual refutation of his own principles. For, the corpuscles of matter having no consciousness of one another's acting (at least before or during the formation, as will be allowed by that very Atheist that attributes reason and perception to them when the formation is finished), they could not consent and make a compact together to carry on the work in several places at once, and one party of them be forming the brain, while another is modelling the heart, and a third delineating the veins. No, there must be, according to mechanism, a successive and gradual operation: some few particles must first be united together, and so by apposition and mutual connexion still more and more by degrees, till the whole system be completed; and a fermentation must be excited in some assignable place, which may expand itself by its elastical power, and break through where it meets with the weakest resistance; and so, by that so simple and mechanical action, may excavate all the various ducts and ventricles of the body. This is the only general account, as mean as it appears to be, that this machine of an Atheist can give of that *fearful and wonderful* production. Now, to confute these pretences, first, there is that visible harmony and symmetry in a human body, such a mutual communication of every vessel and member of it, as gives an internal* evidence that it was not formed successively, and patched up by piece-meal. So uniform and orderly a system, with innumerable motions and functions, all so placed and constituted as never to interfere and clash one with another, and disturb the economy of the whole, must needs be ascribed to an intelligent artist; and to such an artist, as did not begin the matter unprepared and at a venture, and, when he was put to a stand, paused and hesitated† which way he should proceed; but he had

[* internal; 1*st ed.* "intrinsic."—D.]

[† a stand, paused and hesitated; 1*st ed.* "a *non plus*, pause and hesitate."—D.]

first in his comprehensive intellect a complete *idea* and model of the whole organical body, before he entered upon the work. But, secondly, if they affirm that mere matter, by its mechanical affections, without any design or direction, could form the body by steps and degrees; what member, then, do they pitch upon for the foundation and cause of all the rest? Let them shew us the beginning of this circle, and the first wheel of this perpetual motion. Did the blood first exist, antecedent to the formation of the heart? But that is to set the effect before the cause; because all the blood, that we know of, is made in and by the heart, having the quite different form and qualities of chyle before it comes thither. Must the heart, then, have been formed and constituted before the blood was in being? But here, again, the substance of the heart itself is most certainly made and nourished by the blood which is conveyed to it by the coronary arteries. And thus it is through the whole system of the body; every member doth mutually sustain and supply one another; and all are coetaneous, because none of them can subsist alone. But they will say, that a little ferment first making a cavity, which became the left ventricle of the heart, did thence farther* expand itself, and thereby delineate all the arteries of the body.[s] Now, if such a slight and sorry business as that could produce an organical body, one might reasonably expect, that now and then a dead lump of dough might be leavened into an animal; for there a like ferment makes notable tumours and ventricles, besides long† and small channels, which may pass tolerably well for arteries and veins. But, I pray, in this supposed mechanical formation, when the ferment was expanded to the extremities of the arteries, if it still had any elastical force remaining, why did it not go on and break through the receptacle, as other ferment must be allowed to have done, at the mouth and the nostrils? There was as yet no membranous skin formed, that

[* farther; 1*st ed.* "further."—D.]

[s] Cartesius de Formatione Fœtus.

[† long; 1*st ed.* "sundry long."—D.]

might stop and repel it. Or, if the force of it was spent, and did not wheel about and return, what mechanical cause, then, shall we assign for the veins? for this ferment is there supposed to have proceeded from the small capillary extremities of them to the great vein and the heart; otherwise it made* valves, which would have stopped its own passage. And why did that ferment, that at first dispersed itself from the great artery into infinite little ramifications, take a quite contrary method in the making of the veins, where innumerable little rivulets have their confluence into the great vein, the common channel of the blood? Are such opposite motions both equally mechanical, when, in both cases, the matter was under the same modification? And again, when the first ferment is excited, and forms the left ventricle of the heart,† if the fluid matter be uniform and of a similar texture, and therefore on all sides equally resist the expansion, then the cavity must continue one, dilated more and more till the expansive force and the uniform resistance be reduced to an equality, and so nothing at all can be formed by this ferment but a single round bubble. And, moreover, this bubble (if that could make a heart), by reason of its comparative levity to the fluid that encloses it, would necessarily ascend to the top; and consequently we should never find the heart in the midst of the breast. But, if the fluid be supposed to consist of heterogeneous particles, then we cannot conceive how those dissimilar parts should have a like situation in two several fluids when the ferment begins. So that, upon this supposition, there could be no species of animals, nor any similitude between them: one would have its lungs where another hath its liver, and all the other members preposterously placed; there could not be a like configuration of parts in any two individuals. And again, what is that which determines the growth of all living creatures? What principles of mechanism are sufficient to explain it? Why do not all animals continually increase in bigness during the whole space of

[* made; 1*st ed.* "had made."—D.]
[† of the heart; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

their lives, as it is reported of the crocodile? What sets a bound to their stature and dimensions? Or,* if we suppose a bound and *ne plus ultra* to be mechanically fixed; but, then, why so great† a variety in the bulk of the several kinds? Why, also, such constancy observed in that manifold variety? For, as some of the largest trees have seeds no bigger or even less‡ than some diminutive plants, and yet every seed is a perfect plant, with trunk and branches and leaves enclosed in a shell; so the first *embryon* of an ant is supposed by inquisitive naturalists to be as big as that of an elephant, and to promise as fair, at its primitive formation, for as spacious a body;[h] which, nevertheless, by an immutable decree, can never arrive to the millionth part of the other's bulk. And what modification of the first liquid matter can vary so much as to make one embryon capable of so prodigiously vast augmentation, while another is confined to the minuteness of an insect? Is not this manifestly a divine sanction, that hath fixed and determined the shape, the stature, the appetites, and the duration of all creatures in the world? Hither must we have recourse in that great and mysterious affair of an organical formation; and I profess that I cannot discern one step in the whole, that is agreeable to the natural laws of motion. If we consider the heart, which is supposed to be the first principle of motion and life, and divide it by our imagination into§ its constituent parts, its arteries, and veins, and nerves, and tendons, and membranes, and|| innumerable little fibres, that these secondary parts do consist of, we shall find nothing here singular, but what is in any other muscle of the body. 'Tis only the site and posture of these several parts, and the configuration of the whole, that give it the form and functions of a heart. Now, why should the first

[* Or; 1*st ed.* "and."—D.]

[† fixed; but, then, why so great; 1*st ed.* "fixed; why again so great."—D.]

[‡ or even less; 1*st ed.* "or less."—D.]

[h] Swammerdam, Histor. Insect. p. 3.

[§ and divide it by our imagination into; 1*st ed.* "and mentally divide it into."—D.]

[|| and; 1*st ed.* "and the."—D.]

single fibres in the formation of the heart be peculiarly drawn in spiral lines, when the fibres of all other muscles are made by a transverse rectilinear motion? What could determine the fluid matter into that odd and singular figure, when as yet no other member is supposed to be formed, that might direct the course of that fluid matter?* Let mechanism here make an experiment of its power, and produce a spiral and turbinated motion of the whole moved body without an external director. When all the organs are once framed by a supernatural and divine principle, we do willingly admit of mechanism in many functions of the body; but that the organs themselves should be mechanically formed, we conceive it to be impossible and utterly inexplicable. And, if any Atheist will give a clear and philosophical account of the things that are here touched upon, he may then hear of many more, and perhaps more difficult, than these; which their unfitness for a popular auditory, and the remaining parts of my subject that press forward to be treated of, oblige me now to omit.

But, as the Atheist, when he is put to it to explain how any motion of dead matter can beget thought and perception, will endeavour to defend his baffled impiety with the instance of brutes, which he calls thinking machines; so will he now also appeal from the arbitration of reason, in the case of animal productions, to example and matter of fact. He will declaim to us about the admirable structure of the bodies of insects; that they have all the vital parts which the largest of quadrupeds, and even man himself, can boast of; and yet they are the easy† and obvious products of unintelligent nature, that spontaneously and mechanically forms them out

[* direct the course of that fluid matter. Let; 1*st ed.* "design the orbit of its course. Let."—D.]

[† and even man himself, can boast of; and yet they are the easy; 1*st ed.* "and even man himself can boast of; whose fabric they the rather excel, in his opinion, for that very minuteness that makes them contemptible: and that one would be apt to imagine that these elegant and elaborate little engines were all now propagated by generation, and at first produced by some divine wisdom and power; if we did not find by experience that they are the easy."—D.]

of putrefied carcasses and the warm moisture of the soil; and (which is mightily to his purpose) the insects* so begotten without parents, have nevertheless fit organs of generation and difference of sex, and can propagate their own kinds, as if themselves had been begotten† so too: and that if mother earth, in this her barrenness and decrepitness of age, can procreate such swarms of curious engines, which not only themselves enjoy their portion of life, but by a most wonderful instinct impart it to many more, and continue their species; might she not, in the flower of her youth, while she was succulent and fertile, have produced horses and elephants, and even mankind itself, the largest and perfectest animals, as easily as, in this parched and sterile condition, she can make a frog or an insect? Thus he thinks he hath made out, from example and analogy, that at the beginning of things every species of animals might spring mechanically out of the soil, without an intelligent Creator. And, indeed, there is no one thing in the world which hath given so much countenance and shadow of possibility to the notion of Atheism as this unfortunate mistake about the equivocal generation of insects; and, as the oldest remains of atheistical writings are full of this‡ comparison, so it is the main refuge of those that in this and the last age have had the folly and impudence to appear in so wretched a cause.

Now, to this last subterfuge of the mechanical Atheists we can occur several ways. And at present we affirm, first, *ex abundanti*, that though we should allow them the spontaneous production of some minute animals, yet a like primitive origination of mankind could not hence§ be concluded; because they first tacitly suppose, that there is an universal decay of moisture and fertility in the earth. And they cannot avoid the necessity of so doing: for, if the soil be as fruitful now

[* and (which is mightily to his purpose) the insects; 1*st ed.* "and yet (which is mightily to his purpose) that these insects."—D.]

[† begotten; 1*st ed.* "born."—D.]

[‡ are full of this; 1*st ed.* "are charged full with that."—D.]

[§ hence; 1*st ed.* "thence."—D.]

as it was in the beginning, why would it not produce men, and the nobler kind* of beasts, in our days too, if ever it did so? So that, if that supposition be evinced to be erroneous and groundless, all the arguments that they build upon it will be subverted at once. Now, what more easily refuted, than that old vulgar assertion of an universal drought and exsiccation of the earth? as if the sun could evaporate the least drop of its moisture, so that it should never descend again, but be attracted and elevated quite out of the atmosphere. 'Tis now a matter agreed and allowed by all competent judges, that every particle of matter is endowed with a principle of gravity, whereby it would descend to the centre, if it were not repelled upward† by heavier bodies. So that the smallest corpuscle of vapour, if we suppose it to be exhaled to the top of the atmosphere, thence it must come down again, or at least must there remain incumbent upon others; for there's either nothing, or nothing heavier, above it to protrude it any higher; neither can it spontaneously mount any more against the tendency of its nature. And, lest some ignorant Atheist should suspect that peradventure there may be no such top of the atmosphere, but that it may be continued on to the sun, or to indefinite space; he must vouchsafe to be instructed, that the whole weight of any column of the atmosphere, and likewise the specific gravity of its basis, are certainly known by many experiments; and that by this computation (even making allowance for its gradually larger expansion, the higher we go), the very top of any pillar of air is not one hundred miles distant from the surface of the earth. So that hence it is manifest, that the whole terraqueous globe, with its atmosphere, cannot naturally have lost the least particle of moisture since the foundation of the world. But still they may insist, that, although the whole globe cannot be deprived of any of its moisture, yet the habitable earth may have been perpetually the drier, seeing it is assiduously drained and exhausted by the seas. But to

[* kind; 1*st ed.* "kinds."—D.]
[† upward; 1*st ed.* "upwards."—D.]

this we reply, that the very contrary is demonstrable; that the longer the world shall continue, the moister the whole aggregate of the land will be.* For (to take no notice of the supply of its moisture by rains and snow and dews and condensation of vapours, and perhaps by subterraneous passages), the tops of mountains and hills will be continually washed down by the rains, and the channels of rivers corroded by the streams; and the mud that is thereby conveyed into the sea will raise its bottom the higher; and consequently the declivity of rivers will be so much the less; and therefore the continents will be the less drained, and will gradually increase in humidity from the first period of their duration to the final consummation of all things; if the successive production of plants and animals, which are all made up of and nourished by water, and perhaps never return to water again, do not keep things at a poise; or if the divine power† do not interpose and change the settled course and order of nature.

But, let us allow their supposition, that the total of the dry land may have been robbed of some of its moisture which it had at its first constitution; yet still there are some parts of the earth sufficiently soaked and watered to produce men and animals now, if ever they did at all. For‡ do not the Nile, and the Niger, and the Ganges, and the Menam, make yearly inundations in our days, as they have formerly done? And are not the countries so overflown still situate between the tropics, under the direct and most vigorous rays of the sun, the very place where these mechanical Atheists lay the scene of that great transaction? so that, if mankind had ever sprung naturally out of the soil, the experiment would succeed now every year in Æthiopia and Siam, where are all the requisite qualifications that ever have been for such a pro-

[* the whole aggregate of the land will be; 1*st ed.* "will be the whole aggregate of the land."—D.]

[† to the final consummation of all things . . . . . or if the divine power; 1*st ed.* "to their [the] final consummation of all things: if a divine power."—D.]

[‡ to produce men and animals now, if ever they did at all. For; 1*st ed.* "to produce, if ever, those sensitive and locomotive and intelligent plants. For."—D.]

duction. And again, if there hath been such a gradual diminution of the generative faculty of the earth, that it hath dwindled from nobler animals to puny mice and insects; why was there not the like decay in the production of vegetables? We should have lost by this time the whole species of oaks and cedars, and the other tall and lofty sons of the forest, and have found nothing but dwarfish shrubs, and creeping moss, and despicable mushrooms. Or, if they deny the present spontaneous production of larger plants, and confine the earth to as pigmy births in the vegetable kingdom as they do in the other, yet surely, in such a supposed universal decay of nature, even mankind itself, that is now nourished (though not produced) by the earth, must have degenerated in stature and strength in every generation. And yet we have certain demonstration from the Egyptian* mummies, and Roman urns and rings, and measures and edifices, and many other antiquities, that human stature is not diminished at all for the last† two thousand years. Now, if the decay has‡ not been constant and gradual, there has§ been no decay at all; or at least no natural one, nor what may be accounted for by this mechanical Atheist. I conclude, therefore, that, although we should allow the spontaneous production of insects, yet no argument can be deduced from thence for a like origination of mankind.

But, secondly, we affirm, that no insect or animal did ever proceed equivocally from putrefaction, unless in miraculous cases, as in Egypt by the divine judgments; but all are generated from parents of their own kind, male and female; a discovery of that great importance, that perhaps few inventions of this age can pretend to equal usefulness and merit; and which alone is sufficient (if the vices of men did not captivate their reason) to explode and exterminate rank Atheism out of the world. For, if all animals be pro-

[* from the Egyptian; 1*st ed.* "from Egyptian."—D.]

[† is not diminished at all for the last; 1*st ed.* "has not diminished for above."—D.]

[‡ has; 1*st ed.* "hath."—D.] [§ has; 1*st ed.* "hath."—D.]

pagated by generation from parents of their own species, and there be no instance in nature of even a gnat or a mite, either now or in former ages, spontaneously produced; how* came there to be such animals in being, and whence could they proceed? There is no need of much study and deliberation about it: for either they have existed eternally by infinite successions already gone and past, which is in its very† notion absurd and impossible;[i] or their origin must be ascribed to a supernatural and divine power, that formed and created them. Now, to prove our assertion about the seminal production of all living creatures, that we may not repeat the reasons which we have offered before against the first mechanical formation of human bodies, which are equally valid against the spontaneous origin of the minutest insects; we appeal to observation and experiment, which carry the strongest conviction with them, and make the most sensible and lasting impressions. For, whereas it hath been the general tradition and belief, that maggots and flies breed in putrefied carcasses, and particularly bees come from oxen, and hornets from horses, and scorpions from crabfish,[j] &c., all this is‡ now found to be fable and mistake. That sagacious and learned naturalist, Francisco Redi,[k] made innumerable trials with the putrid flesh of all sorts of beasts and fowls, and fishes and serpents, with corrupted cheese, and herbs, and fruits, and even insects themselves; and he constantly found, that all those kinds of putrefaction did only afford a nest and aliment for the eggs and young of those insects that he admitted to come there, but produced no animal of themselves by a spontaneous formation: for, when he suffered those things to putrefy in hermetically sealed glasses, and vessels close covered with paper; and not only so, lest the exclusion of the air might be supposed to hinder

[* produced; how; 1st ed. "produced *de novo*; how,"—D.]
[† very; 1st ed. "own."—D.] [i] See the former Sermon.
[j] Ἵπποι μὲν σφηκῶν γένεσις, ταῦροι δὲ μελισσῶν. Nicander. [*Ther.* 741.—D.]
[‡ all this is; 1st ed. "all is."—D.]
[k] Redi de Generatione Insectorum.

the experiment, but in vessels covered with fine lawn, so as to admit the air and keep out the insects; no living thing was ever produced there, though he exposed them to the action of the sun, in the warm climate of Florence, and in the kindest season of the year. Even flies crushed and corrupted, when enclosed in such vessels, did never procreate a new fly; though there, if in any case, one would have expected that success. And when the vessels were open, and the insects had free access to the aliment within them, he diligently observed that no other species were produced but of such as he saw go in and feed, and deposit their eggs there; which they would readily do in all putrefaction, even in a mucilage of bruised spiders, where worms were soon hatched out of such eggs, and quickly changed into flies of the same kind with their parents. And was not that a surprising transformation indeed, if, according to the vulgar opinion, those dead and corrupted spiders spontaneously changed into flies? And thus far we are obliged to the diligence of Redi: from whence we may conclude, that no dead flesh, nor herbs, nor other putrefied bodies, nor any thing that hath not then actually either a vegetable or animal life, can produce any insect. And if we should allow, as he did, that every animal and plant doth naturally breed and nourish by its substance some peculiar insect, yet the Atheist could make no advantage of this concession as to a like origination of mankind. For surely 'tis beyond even an Atheist's credulity and impudence, to affirm that the first men might proceed out of the galls and tumours of leaves of trees, as some maggots and flies are supposed to do now; or might grow upon trees, as the story goes about barnacles; or perhaps might be the lice of some vast prodigious animals, whose species is now extinct. But, though we suppose him guilty of such an extravagant folly, he will only shift the difficulty, and not wholly remove it; for we shall still expect an account of the spontaneous formation of those mountainous kind of animals and men-bearing trees. And, as to the worms that are bred in the intestines and other inward parts of living creatures, their

production is not material to our present inquiry, till some Atheist do affirm, that his own ancestors had such an original. I say, if we should allow this concession of Redi, it would do no service to our adversaries: but even here also they are defeated by the happy curiosity of Malpighi and others,[1] who observed and discovered, that each of those tumours and excrescences of plants, out of which generally issues a fly or a worm, are at first made by such insects, which wound the tender buds with a long hollow trunk, and deposit an egg in the hole with a sharp corroding liquor, which causeth a swelling in the leaf, and so closeth the orifice: and within this tumour the worm is hatched, and receives its aliment, till it hath eat its way through. Neither need we recur to an equivocal production of vermin in the *phthiriasis* and in Herod's disease, who was σκωληκόβρωτος, *eaten of worms*,[m] or maggots. Those horrible distempers are always accompanied with putrefying ulcers; and it hath been observed by the most accurate Lewenhoeck,[n] that lice and flies, which have a most wonderful instinct and acuteness of sense to find out convenient places for the hatching and nourishment of their young, do mightily endeavour to lay their eggs upon sores; and that one will lay above a hundred eggs, and may naturally increase to some hundreds of thousands in a quarter of a year: which gives a full and satisfactory account of the *phenomena* of those diseases. And whereas it is said, *Exod.* xvi. ver. 20, that some of the *Israelites left of the manna until the morning, and it bred worms and stank;* which an Atheist may make an objection, as either against us, or against the truth of the Scriptures; I understand it no otherwise, than that the manna was *fly-blown*. It was then the month of October, which in that southern climate, after the preceding autumnal rains, doth afford a favourable season and copious nutriment for infinite swarms of insects. Neither do I ascribe it to a miraculous

[1] Malpighius de Gallis. Swammerdam de Gen. Insect. Lewenhoeck Epistol.

[m] Acts, xii. 23. [n] Continuat. Epistol. p. 101.

power, that some of the manna should breed worms, but that all the rest should be preserved sound and untainted. And, if any one shall rigidly urge from that passage* the literal expression of *breeding*, he must allow Moses to speak† in the language of the vulgar in common affairs of life. We do now generally believe the Copernican system; yet I suppose, upon ordinary occasions, we shall still use the popular terms of sunrise and sunset, and not introduce a new pedantic description of them from the motion of the earth. And then, as to the vulgar opinion, that frogs are made in the clouds, and brought down by the rains, it may be thus easily refuted: for at that very instant when they are supposed to descend, you may find by dissection not only their stomachs full of meat, but their intestines full of excrement; so that they had lurked before in the day-time in holes and bushes and grass, and were then invited abroad by the freshness of a shower. And by this time we may understand what credit and authority those old stories ought to have about the monstrous‡ productions in Egypt after the inundation of the Nile, of mice and frogs and serpents, half flesh and half mud; nay, of the legs, and arms, and other limbs of men, *et quicquid Græcia mendax;* altogether as true as what is seriously related by Helmont,° that foul linen, stopped in a vessel that hath wheat in it, will in twenty-one days' time turn the wheat into mice: which one§ may guess to have been the philosophy and information of some housewife, who had not so carefully covered her wheat but that the mice could come at it, and were there taken napping, just when they had made an end of their cheer.|| Corn is so innocent from this calumny of breeding of mice, that it doth not produce the very weevils that live in it and consume it;

[* from that passage; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[† he must allow Moses to speak; 1*st ed.* "he must give leave to speak."—D.]

[‡ about the monstrous; 1*st ed.* "about monstrous."—D.]

° Helmont, Imago Ferment. &c. p. 92. edit. 1652.

[§ which one; 1*st ed.* "which, without conjuring, one."—D.]

[|| their cheer; 1*st ed.* "their good cheer."—D.]

the whole course of whose generation and periodical changes hath been curiously observed and described by the ingenious Lewenhoeck. And, moreover, that we may deprive the Atheist of all hopes and pretensions of argument from this baffled opinion of equivocal insects, we will acquaint him, from the most accurate observations of Swammerdam, that even the supposed change of worms into flies is no real transmutation; but that most of those members, which at last become visible to the eye, are existent at the beginning, artificially complicated together, and covered with membranes and tunicles, which are afterwards stript off and laid aside: and all the rest of that process is no more surprising than the eruption of horns in some brutes, or of teeth and beard in men at certain periods of age. And, as we have established our assertion of the seminal production of all kinds of animals, so likewise we affirm, that the meanest plant cannot be raised without seed by any formative power residing in the soil. To which assertion we are encouraged, first, from the known seeds of all vegetables, one or two only excepted, that are left to future discovery; which seeds, by the help of microscopes, are all found to be real and perfect plants, with leaves and trunk curiously folded up and enclosed in the *cortex;* nay, one single grain of wheat, or barley, or rye, shall contain four or five distinct plants under one common tunicle; a very convincing argument of the providence and goodness of God, that those vegetables, that were appointed to be the* chief sustenance of mankind, should have that multiplied fecundity above any others. And, secondly, by that famous experiment of Malpighi, who a long time enclosed a quantity of earth in a vessel, secured by a fine cloth from the small imperceptible seeds of plants that are blown about with the winds; and had this success of his curiosity, to be the first happy discoverer of this noble and important truth, that no species of plants can be produced out of earth without† a pre-existent seed; and consequently they

[* the; *so 1st ed. and other eds.; not in ed.* 1735.—D.]

[† out of earth without; *1st ed.* "out of earth *de novo* without."—D.]

were all created and raised at the beginning of things by the almighty gardener, God blessed for ever. And, lastly, as to those various and elegant shells, that are dug up in continents, and embodied in stones and rocks at a vast distance from any sea, which this Atheist may possibly allege for an instance of a plastic faculty of nature; 'tis now generally agreed by the most diligent inquirers about them, that they are no sportful productions of the soil, as was formerly believed, but that all did once belong to real and living fishes; since each of them exactly resembles some shell of the seas,* both in its outward lineaments, and inward texture, and specific gravity, and all other properties: which therefore are so far from being subservient to Atheists in their audacious attempts against God and religion, that they rather afford an experimental confirmation of the universal deluge.

And thus we have competently shewn, that every species of living creatures, every small insect, and even the herbs of the field, give a casting vote against Atheism, and declare the necessity of a supernatural formation. If the earth in its first constitution had been left to itself, what horrid deformity and desolation had for ever overspread its face! Not one living inhabitant would be found† on all its spacious surface; not so much as a worm in the bowels of it, nor one single fish in the vast bosom of the sea; not a mantle of grass or moss to cover and conceal the nakedness of nature. An eternal sterility must have possessed the world, where all things had been fixed and fastened everlastingly with the adamantine chains of specific gravity; if the Almighty had not spoken and said, *Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind; and it was so.* 'Twas God that then created the first seminal forms of all animals and vegetables, that *commanded the waters to bring forth abundantly,* and *the earth to pro-*

[* since each of them exactly resembles some shell of the seas; 1*st ed.* "seeing that each of them doth exactly resemble some other shell on the sea-shore."—D.]

[† inhabitant would be found; 1*st ed.* "inhabitant found."—D.]

duce living creatures after their kind; that *made man in his own image after his own likeness;* that by the efficacy of his first blessing made *him be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth;* by whose alone power and conservation *we all live, and move, and have our being.*

May the same most glorious God of his infinite mercy grant, that, as we *have sought the Lord, and felt after him, and found him* in these works of his creation; so now that *we have known God, we may glorify him as God,* both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

A

CONFUTATION OF ATHEISM

FROM THE

STRUCTURE AND ORIGIN OF HUMAN BODIES.

THE THIRD AND LAST PART.

SERMON V.

Preached September the 5th, 1692.

ACTS, xvii. 27.

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him; though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being.

IN my former discourses I have* endeavoured to prove, that human race was neither (1.) from everlasting without beginning; nor (2.) owes its beginning to the influence of heavenly bodies; nor (3.) to what they call nature, that is, the† necessary and mechanical motions of dead senseless matter. I proceed now to examine the fourth and last plea of the enemies to religion and their own souls, that mankind came accidentally into the world, and hath its life and motion and being by mere *chance* and *fortune*.

We need not much wonder, that this last opinion should obtain almost universally among the Atheists of these times. For, whereas the other require‡ some small stock of philo-

[* discourses I have; 1*st ed.* "discourses, to which I must refer you, I have."—D.]

[† that is, the; 1*st ed.* "or to the."—D.]

[‡ require; 1*st ed.* "do require."—D.]

sophy to understand or maintain them, this account is so easy and compendious, that it needs none at all; and consequently is the more proper and agreeable to the great industry and capacity of the most numerous party of them. For what more easy to say, than that all the bodies of the first animals and plants were shuffled into their several forms and structures *fortuitously*, that is, these Atheists know not how, nor will trouble themselves to endeavour to know? For that is the meaning of chance; and yet this is all that they say, or can say, to the great matter in question. And indeed this little is enough in all reason; and, could they impose on the rest of mankind, as easily as delude themselves, with a notion that *chance* can effect a thing, it would be the most expedite and effectual means to make their cause victorious over virtue and religion. For if you once allow* them such an acceptation of chance, you have precluded yourself, they think, from any more reasoning and objecting against them. The mechanical Atheist, though you grant him his laws of mechanism, is nevertheless inextricably puzzled and baffled with the first formation of animals; for he must undertake to determine all the various motions, and figures, and positions, and combinations of his atoms, and to demonstrate that such a quantity of motion, impressed upon particles so shaped and situated, will necessarily range and dispose them into the form and frame of an organical body; an attempt as difficult and unpromising of success, as if he himself should make the essay to produce some new kinds of animals out of such senseless materials, or to rebuild the moving and living fabric out of its dust in the grave. But the Atheist that we are now to deal with, if you do but concede to him that fortune may be an agent, presumes† himself safe and invulnerable, secure above the reach of any further disputes. For, if you proceed to ask questions, and bid him assign the proper causes and determinate manner of that fortuitous formation, you thereby deny

[* allow; 1*st ed.* "do allow."—D.]

[† presumes; 1*st ed.* "doth presume."—D.]

him what you granted before, and take away the very hypothesis and the nature of chance, which supposeth that no certain cause or manner of it can possibly be assigned. And as the stupidity of some libertines, that demand a sight of a spirit or human soul to convince them of its existence, hath been frequently and deservedly exposed; because whatsoever may be the object of our sight must not be a soul or spirit, but an opaque body; so this Atheist would tax us of the like nonsense and contradiction, if, after he hath named to us fortune or chance, we should expect from him any particular and distinct account of the origin of mankind; because it is the very essence and notion of his chance to be wholly unaccountable; and if an account could be given of it, it would then no longer be chance, but mechanism, or a necessary production of certain effects from certain causes, according to the universal laws of motion. Thus we are to know, that if once we admit of fortune in the formation of mankind, there is no further inquiry to be made, no more difficulties to be solved, and no account to be demanded. And who then can admire, if the inviting easiness and compendiousness of this assertion should so dazzle the eyes of our Atheist, that he overlooks those gross absurdities that are so conspicuous in it?

(1.) For, first, if this Atheist would have his chance or fortune to be a real and substantial agent; as the vulgar seem to have commonly apprehended, some making it a divinity, others they do not conceive what; he is doubly more stupid and more supinely ignorant than those vulgar; in that he assumes such a notion of fortune as, besides its being erroneous, is inconsistent with his Atheism. For since,* according to the Atheists, the whole universe is *corpus et inane, body and nothing else,* this chance, if it do really and physically effect any thing, must itself be body also. And what a numerous train of absurdities do attend such an assertion! too visible and obvious to deserve to be here

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]

insisted on. For, indeed, it is no less than flat contradiction to itself. For, if this chance be supposed to be a body, it must then be a part of the common mass of matter; and consequently be subject to the universal and necessary laws of motion; and therefore it cannot be chance, but true mechanism and nature.

(2.) But, secondly, if he forbear to call chance a real agent, and is content to have it only a result or event; since* all matter, or some portion of it, may be naturally exempt from these supposed mechanical laws, and be endowed with a power of spontaneous or fortuitous motion, which power, when it is exerted, must produce an effect properly casual, and therefore might constitute the first animate bodies accidentally, against the supposed natural tendency of the particles of those bodies; even this second assertion is contrary to common sense, as well as common observation. For how can he conceive that any parcel of dead matter can spontaneously divert and decline itself from the line of its motion, without a new impulse from external bodies? If it can intrinsically stir itself, and either commence its motion or alter its course, it must have a principle of self-activity, which is life and sense. But sense I have proved formerly[a] to be incompatible with mere bodies, even those of the most compound and elaborate textures, much more with single atoms or solid particles of matter, that, having no intestine motion of parts, are destitute of the first foundation and capacity of life. And moreover, though these particles should be supposed to have this internal principle of sense, it would still be repugnant to the notion of chance; because their motions would not then be casual, but voluntary, not by chance, but choice and design. And again, we appeal to observation, whether any bodies have such a power of fortuitous motion. We should surely have experiment of it in the effects of nature and art: no body would retain the same constant and uniform weight according to its bulk and sub-

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.] [a] Serm. II.

stance, but would vary perpetually, as that spontaneous power of motion should determine its present tendency. All the various machines and utensils would now and then play odd pranks and capricios, quite contrary to their proper structures, and designs of the artificers. Whereas, on the contrary, all bodies are observed to have always a certain and determinate motion according to the degrees of their external impulse, and their inward principle of gravitation, and the resistance of the bodies they occur with; which therefore is without error exactly foreseen and computed by sagacious artists. And if ever dead matter should deviate from this motion, it could not proceed from itself, but a supernatural agent; and ought not to be called a chance, but a miracle.

For chance is but a mere name, and really nothing in itself; a conception of our own minds, and only a compendious way of speaking, whereby we would express, that such effects as are commonly attributed to chance were verily produced by their true and proper causes, but without their designing to produce them. And in any event called casual, if you take away the real and physical causes, there remains nothing but a simple negation of the agents intending such an event; which negation being no real entity, but a conception only of man's intellect wholly extrinsical to the action, can have no title to a share in the production. As in that famous example, (which Plutarch[b] says is the only one where fortune is related to have done a thing artificially,) when a painter having* finished the picture of a horse, excepting the loose froth about his mouth and his bridle, and, after many unsuccessful essays, despairing to do that to his satisfaction, in a great rage threw his sponge at it, all besmeared, as it was, with the colours, which fortunately hitting upon the right place, by one bold stroke of chance most exactly supplied the want of skill in the artist: even here it is manifest, that, considering the quantity and determination of the motion that was impressed by the painter's hand

[b] Plutarch. Περὶ Τύχης. [*Mor.* t. i. p. 268. ed. Wyttenb.—D.]

[* when a painter having; 1*st ed.* "of a painter that having."—D.]

upon the sponge, and resistance* of the air, the sponge did mechanically and unavoidably move in that particular line of motion, and so necessarily hit upon that part of the picture; and all the paint that it left there was as certainly placed by true natural causes, as any one stroke of the pencil in the whole piece. So that this strange effect of the sponge was fortuitous only with respect to the painter, because† he did not design nor foresee such an effect; but in itself, as‡ to its real causes, it was necessary and natural. In a word, the true notion of *fortune* (τῆς τύχης) denoteth no more than the ignorance of such an event in some knowing agent concerned about it. So that it owes its very being to human understanding, and without relation to that is really nothing. How absurd then and ridiculous is the Atheist, that would make this fortune the cause of the formation of mankind; whereas manifestly there could be no such thing or notion in the world as fortune, till human nature was actually formed! It was man that first made fortune, and not fortune that produced man. For, since§ fortune in its proper acceptation supposeth the ignorance of something, in a subject capable of knowledge, if you take away mankind, such a notion hath no existence, neither with relation to inanimate bodies, that can be conscious of nothing, nor to an omniscient God, that can be ignorant of nothing. And so likewise the adequate meaning of *chance* (τοῦ αὐτομάτου), (as it is distinguished from fortune, in that the latter is understood to befall only rational agents, but chance to be among inanimate bodies,) is a‖ bare negation, that signifies no more than this, that any effect among such bodies ascribed to chance is really¶ produced by physical agents, according to the established laws of motion, but without their consciousness of concurring to the production, and without their intention of

[* the sponge, and resistance; 1*st ed.* "the sponge, compounded with the specific gravity of the sponge, and the resistance."—D.]

[† because; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.] [‡ as; 1*st ed.* "and as."—D.]

[§ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.] [‖ is a; 1*st ed.* "is really a."—D.]

[¶ really; 1*st ed.* "verily."—D.]

such an effect. So that *chance*, in its true sense, is all one with *nature;* and both words are used promiscuously by some ancient writers,[c] to express the same thing. And we must be wary, lest we ascribe any real subsistence or personality to this nature or chance; for it is merely a notional and imaginary thing; an abstract universal, which is properly nothing; a conception of our own making, occasioned by our reflecting upon the settled course of things; denoting only thus much, that all those bodies move and act according to their essential properties and qualities, without any consciousness or intention of so doing. So that in this genuine acceptation of chance here is nothing supposed that can supersede the known laws of natural motion: and thus to attribute the formation of mankind to chance, is all one with the former atheistical assertion, that ascribes it to nature or mechanism; and consequently it hath received a prolix and sufficient refutation in my preceding discourse.

(3.) But, thirdly, 'tis likely that our Atheist may willingly renounce the doctrine of chance as a thing differing from nature, and may allow it to be the same thing, and that too no real and substantial agent, but only an abstract intellectual notion: but still he hath another expedient in reserve, which is a middle and safe way between the former rigorous mechanism and the extravagancies of fortuitous motion: viz. that at the beginning, all things, 'tis true, proceeded necessarily and fatally according to the mechanical powers and affections of matter: but nevertheless the several kinds of animals were not formed at the first trial and effort without one error or miscarriage, (as strict mechanism would suppose), but there was an immense variety of ferments, and tumours, and excrescences of the soil, pregnant and big with *fœtuses* of all imaginable shapes and structures of body;[d]

[c] Plato, x. de Legibus. [*Opp.* t. viii. p. 471-2. ed. 1826.—D.] Πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ γῆν καὶ ἀέρα, φύσει πάντα εἶναι καὶ τύχῃ φασὶν—οὔτε διά τινα θεὸν, οὔτε διὰ τέχνην, ἀλλὰ ὃ λέγομεν φύσει καὶ τύχῃ.

[d] Βουγενῆ ἀνδρόπρωρα. Emped. [apud Plutarch. *Adv. Colot., Mor.* t. v. p. 390. ed. Wyttenb.—D.]

millions of which were utterly uncapable of life and motion, being the *molæ*, as it were, and the abortions, of mother earth: and many of those that had life and powers to preserve their own individuals, yet wanted the due means of propagation, and therefore could not transmit their species to the following ages: and that those few only, that we now find in being, did happen (for he cannot express it but by the characters of a chance) to have all the parts necessary not only for their own lives, but for the continuation of their kinds. This is the favourite opinion among the Atheists, and the most plausible of all; by which they think they may elude that most formidable argument for the being of God, from the admirable contrivance of organical bodies, and the exquisite fitness of their several parts for those ends and uses they are put to, and seem to have been designed for. For, say they, since* those innumerable instances of blunder and deformity were quickly removed out of knowledge and being, it is plain that no animals ought now to be found but such as have due organs necessary for their own nourishment and increase of their kinds: so that this boasted usefulness of parts, which makes men attribute their origination to an intelligent and wise agent, is really no argument at all, because it follows also from the Atheist's assertion. For, since† some animals are actually preserved in being till now, they must needs all of them have those parts that are of use and necessity: but that at first was only a lucky hit without skill or design, and ever since is a necessary condition of their continuation. And so, for instance, when they are urged with the admirable frame and structure of the eye; which consists of so great a variety of parts, all excellently adapted to the uses of vision; that (to omit mathematical considerations with relation to‡ optics) hath its many coats and humours transparent and colourless, lest it should tinge and sophisticate the light that it lets in, by a natural jaun-

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]
[† since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]
[‡ with relation to; 1*st ed.* "more proper for."—D.]

dice; that hath its pupil so constituted as to admit of contraction and dilatation according to the differing degrees of light and the exigencies of seeing; that hath eyelids so commodiously placed, to cleanse the ball from dust, to shed necessary moisture upon it through numerous glandules, and to be drawn over it like a curtain for the convenience of sleep; that hath a thousand more beauties in its figure and texture never studied nor admired enough: they will briskly reply, that they willingly concede all that can be said in the commendation of so noble a member; yet notwithstanding they cannot admit for good reasoning, *He that formed the eye, shall not he see?*[e] for it was blind nature alone, or matter mechanically moved without consciousness or direction, that made this curious organ of vision. For the short of the matter is this: this elegant structure of the eye is no more than is necessary to life; and consequently* is included in the very suppositions† of any animals living and continuing till now; though those be but the very few that at the beginning had the good fortune to have eyes, among many millions of monsters that were destitute of them, *sine vultu cæca reperta*,[f] and therefore did fatally perish soon after their birth. And thus, when we insist on other like arguments of divine wisdom in the frame of animate bodies; as the artificial position of many myriads of valves, all so situate as to give a free passage to the blood and other humours in their due channels and courses, but not permit them to regurgitate and disturb the great circulation and economy of life; as the spiral, and not annulary, fibres of the intestines, for the better exercise of their functions; as the provident furnishing of temporary parts for the *fœtus* during the time of gestation, which are afterwards laid aside; as the strange

[e] Psal. xciv. 9.

[* necessary to life; and consequently; 1*st ed.* "necessary to seeing; and this noble faculty of seeing is no more than is necessary to life; and consequently."—D.]

[† suppositions; 1*st ed.* "supposition."—D.]

[f] Lucret. lib. v. [839.—D.]

sagacity of little insects in choosing fit* places for the exclusion of their eggs, and for the provision of proper food, when the young ones are hatched and need it; as the ardent στοργή, or natural affection, in those animals, whose offspring cannot at first procure their own sustenance, but must infallibly perish if not fed by the parents; as the untaught instincts and impresses upon every species, directing them, without imitation or deliberation, to the ready knowledge of proper food, to one and the best way of their preservation and defence, and to the never-failing propagation of their own kind: whatever considerations of this nature you propose to this Atheist, as, indeed, such instances are innumerable, all evidently setting forth the Almighty's wisdom and goodness to such as are able to judge, and will judge impartially;† he hath this one subterfuge from them all, that these things are mistaken for tokens of skill and contrivance, though they be but necessary consequences of the present existence of those creatures. For he that supposeth any animals to subsist, doth by that very supposition allow them every member and faculty that are necessary to subsistence; such as are those we have just now enumerated. And therefore, unless we can prove *a priori* and independent of this usefulness, now that things are once supposed to have existed and propagated, that among almost infinite trials and essays at the beginning of things, among millions of monstrous shapes and imperfect formations, a few such animals as now exist *could not possibly* be produced, these after-considerations are of very little moment; because, if such animals could in that way *possibly* be formed, as might live, and move, and propagate their beings, all this admired and applauded usefulness of their several fabrics is but a necessary condition and consequence of their existence and propagation.

This is the last pretence and sophistry of the Atheists

[* choosing fit; 1*st ed.* "choosing of fit."—D.]

[† judge impartially; 1*st ed.* "judge indifferently and impartially."—D.]

against the proposition in my text, that we received our life and being from a divine wisdom and power. And, as they cannot justly accuse me of any ways concealing or balking their grand objection, so I believe these following considerations will give them no reason to boast that it cannot receive a just and satisfactory answer.

(1.) First, therefore, we affirm that we can prove, and have done it already by arguments *a priori* (which is the challenge of the Atheists), that these animals, that now exist, could not *possibly* have been formed at first by millions of trials. For, since* they allow by their very hypothesis (and, without standing to their† courtesy, we have proved it before), that there can be no casual or spontaneous motion of the particles of matter, it will follow that every single monster, among so many supposed myriads,ε must have been mechanically and necessarily formed according to the known laws of motion, and the temperament and quality of the matter that it was made of. Which is sufficient to evince, that no such monsters were or could have been formed. For, to denominate them even monsters, they must have had some rude kind of organical bodies; some *stamina* of life, though never so clumsy; some system of parts compounded of solids and liquids, that executed, though but bunglingly, their peculiar motions and functions. But we have lately shewn it impossible for nature unassisted to constitute such bodies, whose structure is against the law of specific gravity. So that she could not make the least endeavour towards the producing of a monster, or of any thing that hath more vital and organical parts than we find in a rock of marble or a fountain of water. And, again, though we should not contend with them about their monsters and abortions, yet since‡ they suppose even the perfect animals, that are still in being, to have been formed

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]

[† their; 1*st ed.* "that."—D.]

ε Multaque tum tellus etiam portenta creare, &c. Lucret. lib. v. [835.—D.]

[‡ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]

mechanically among the rest, and only add some millions of monsters to the reckoning, they are liable to all the difficulties in the former explication, and are expressly refuted through the whole preceding sermon; where it is abundantly shewn, that a spontaneous production is against the catholic laws of motion, and against matter of fact; a thing without example, not only in man and the nobler animals, but in the smallest of insects and the vilest of weeds; though the fertility of the earth cannot be said to have been impaired since the beginning of the world.

(2.) Secondly, we may observe that this evasion of the Atheist is fitted only to elude such arguments of divine wisdom as are taken from things necessary to the conservation of the animal, as the faculties of sight, and motion, and nutrition, and the like; because such usefulness is, indeed, included in a general supposition of the existence of that animal: but it miserably fails him against other reasons from such members and powers of the body as are not necessary absolutely to living and propagating, but only much conduce to our better subsistence and happier condition. So the* most obvious contemplation of the frame of our bodies; as that we all have double sensories, two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, is an effectual confutation of this atheistical sophism. For a double organ of these senses is not at all comprehended in the notion of bare existence; one of them being sufficient to have preserved life, and kept up the species; as common experience is a witness. Nay, even the very nails of our fingers are an infallible token of design and contrivance; for they are useful and convenient to give strength and firmness to those parts in the various functions they are put to, and to defend the numerous nerves and tendons that are under them, which have a most exquisite sense of pain, and without that native armour would continually be exposed to it; and yet who will say that nails are absolutely necessary to human life, and are concluded in the supposition of

[* So the; 1*st ed.* "So that the."—D.]

simple existence? It is manifest, therefore, that there was a contrivance and foresight of the usefulness of nails antecedent to their formation. For the old stale pretence of the Atheists, that things were first made fortuitously, and afterwards their usefulness was observed or discovered,[h] can have no place here; unless nails were either absolutely requisite to the existence of mankind, or were found only in some individuals or some nations of men, and so might be ascribed to necessity upon one account, or to fortune upon the other. But, from the Atheist's supposition, that, among the infinite diversity of the first terrestrial productions, there were animals of all imaginable shapes and structures of body, all of which survived and multiplied, that, by reason of their make and fabric, could possibly do so; it necessarily follows, that we should now have some nations without nails upon their fingers; others with one eye only, as the poets describe the Cyclops in Sicily, and the Arimaspi in Scythia; others with one ear, or one nostril, or, indeed, without any organ of smelling, because that sense is not necessary to man's subsistence; others destitute of the use of language, since* mutes also may live: one people would have the feet of goats, as the feigned Satyrs and Panisci; another would resemble the head of Jupiter Ammon, or the horned statues of Bacchus; the Sciapodes, and Enotocœtæ,[i] and other monstrous nations would no longer be† fables, but real instances in nature; and, in a word, all the ridiculous and extravagant shapes that can be imagined, all the fancies and whimsies of poets, and painters, and Egyptian idolaters, if so be they are consistent with life and propagation, would be now actually in being, if our Atheist's notion were true; which, therefore, may deservedly pass for a mere dream and an error, till they please to make new discoveries in *terra incognita*, and bring

[h] Lucret. lib. iv. [832.—D.]

Nil ideo quoniam natum est in corpore, ut uti
Possemus: sed quod natum est, id procreat usum.

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]

[i] Plinius et Strabo. [† no longer be; 1*st ed.* "be no longer."—D.]

along with them some savages of all these fabulous and monstrous configurations.

(3.) But, thirdly, that we may proceed yet further with the Atheist, and convince him, that not only his principle is absurd, but his consequences also as absurdly deduced from it, we will allow him an uncertain extravagant chance against the natural laws of motion; though not forgetting that that notion hath been refuted before, and therefore this concession is wholly *ex abundanti*. I say, then, that though there were really such a thing as this chance or fortune, yet nevertheless it would be extremely absurd* to ascribe the formation of human bodies to a cast of this chance. For let us consider the very bodies themselves. Here are confessedly all the marks and characters of design in their structure that can be required, though one suppose a divine Author had made them: here is nothing in the work itself unworthy of so great a Master: here are no internal† arguments from the subject against the truth of that supposition. Have we, then, any capacity to judge and distinguish what is the effect of chance, and what is made by art and wisdom? When a medal‡ is dug out of the ground, with some Roman emperor's image upon it, and an inscription that agrees to his titles and history, and an impress upon the reverse relating to some memorable occurrence in his life; can we be sure that this medal was really coined by an artificer, or is but a product of the soil from whence it was taken, that might casually or naturally receive that texture and figure; as many kinds of fossils are very oddly and elegantly shaped according to the modification of their constituent salts, or the cavities they were formed in? Is it a matter of doubt and controversy, whether the pillar of Trajan or Antoninus, the

[* nevertheless it would be extremely absurd; 1*st ed.* "notwithstanding it is downright madness."—D.]

[† internal; 1*st ed.* "intrinsical."—D.]

[‡ what is the effect of chance, and what is made by art and wisdom? When a medal; 1*st ed.* "what is by chance, and what by art and wisdom? Can we be sure, when a medal."—D.]

ruins of Persepolis, or the late temple of Minerva, were the designs and works of architecture; or, perhaps, might originally exist so, or be raised up in an earthquake by subterraneous vapour? Do not we all think ourselves infallibly certain, that this or that very commodious house must needs have been built by human art; though perhaps a natural cave in a rock may have something not much unlike to parlours or chambers? And yet he must be a mere idiot, that cannot discern more strokes and characters of workmanship in the structure of an animal (in an human body especially) than in the most elegant medal or edifice in the world. They will believe the first parents of mankind to have been fortuitously formed without wisdom or art; and that for this sorry* reason, because it is not simply *impossible* but that they may have been formed so. And who can demonstrate (if chance be once admitted of) but that *possibly* all the inscriptions and other remains of antiquity may be mere *lusus naturæ*, and not works of human artifice? If this be good reasoning, let us no longer make any pretences to judgment, or a faculty of discerning between things probable and improbable; for, except flat contradictions, we may, upon equal reasons, believe all things, or nothing at all. And do the Atheists thus argue in common matters of life? Would they have mankind lie idle, and lay aside all care of provisions by agriculture or commerce, because possibly the dissolution of the world may happen the next moment? Had Dinocrates really carved Mount Athos into a statue of Alexander the Great,[j] and had the memory of the fact been obliterated by some accident, who could afterwards have proved it impossible but that it might casually have been formed so? For every mountain must have some determinate figure, and why then not an human one as possibly as another? And yet I suppose none could

[* sorry; 1*st ed.* "solid."—D.]

[j] Lucret. lib. v. [105.—D.]

——— dictis dabit ipsa fidem res
Forsitan, et graviter terrarum motibus orbis
Omnia conquassari in parvo tempore cernes.

have seriously believed so, upon this bare account of possibility. 'Tis an opinion that generally obtains among philosophers, that there is but one common matter, which is diversified by accidents; and the same numerical quantity of it, by variation* of texture, may constitute successively all kinds of bodies in the world. So that 'tis not absolutely impossible, but that, if you take any other matter of equal weight and substance with the body of a man, you may blend it so long till it be shuffled into human shape and an organical structure. But who is he so abandoned to sottish credulity, as to think, upon that principle, that a clod of earth in a sack may ever, by eternal shaking, receive the fabric of man's body? And yet this is very near akin, nay, it is exactly parallel to the reasoning of Atheists about fortuitous production. If mere possibility be a good foundation for belief, even Lucian's *True History* may be *true* upon that account, and Palæphatus's Tales[k] may be *credible* in spite of the title.

It hath been excellently well urged in this case, both by ancients and moderns, that to attribute such admirable structures to blind fortune or chance, is no less than† to suppose, that, if innumerable figures of the twenty-four letters be cast abroad at random, they might constitute in due order the whole *Æneis* of Virgil or the *Annales* of Ennius.[1] Now, the Atheists may pretend to elude this comparison; as if the case was not fairly stated. For herein we first make an idea of a particular poem, and then demand, if chance can possibly describe that; and so we conceive man's body thus actually formed, and then affirm that it exceeds the power of chance to constitute a being like that: which, they may say, is to expect imitation from chance, and not simple production. But at the first beginning of things there was no copy to be followed, nor any pre-existent form of human bodies to

[* variation; 1*st ed.* "variations."—D.]

[k] Palæph. Περὶ Ἀπίστων, De Incredibilibus.

[† less than; 1*st ed.* "less absurd than."—D.]

[1] Cicero de Natura Deorum, lib. ii. cap. 37.

be imitated: so that, to put the case fairly, we should strip our minds and fancies from any particular notion and idea of a living body or a poem; and then we shall understand, that what shape and structure soever should be at first casually formed, so that it could live and propagate, might be man; and whatsoever should result from the strewing of those loose letters, that made any sense and measures, might be the poem we seek for.

To which we reply, that if we should allow them, that there was no pre-existent idea of human nature till it was actually formed, (for the idea of man in the divine intellect must not now be considered,) yet, because they declare that great multitudes of each species of animals did fortuitously emerge out of the soil[m] in distant countries and climates, what could that be less than imitation in blind chance to make many individuals of one species so exactly alike? Nay, though they should now, to cross us and evade the force of the argument, desert their ancient doctrine, and derive all sorts of animals from single originals of each kind, which should be the common parents of all the race; yet surely, even in this account, they must necessarily allow* two at least, male and female, in every species: which chance could neither make so very nearly alike, without copying and imitation; nor so usefully differing, without contrivance and wisdom. So that, let them take whether they will, if they deduce all animals from single pairs of a sort, even to make the second of a pair is to write after a copy; it is, in the former comparison, by the casting of loose letters to compose the pre-existent particular poem of Ennius. But, if they make numerous sons and daughters of earth among every species of creatures, as all their authors have supposed, this

[m] Lucret. lib. v. [805.—D.]

Hinc ubi quæque loci regio opportuna dabatur,
Crescebant uteri, &c.

Et ibidem, [789.—D.]

——— inde loci mortalia sæcla creavit,
Multa modis multis varia ratione coorta.

[* allow; 1st ed. "constitute."—D.]

is not only, as was said before, to believe a monkey may once scribble the *Leviathan* of Hobbes, but may do the same frequently by an habitual kind of chance.*

Let us consider how next to impossible it is, that chance (if there were such a thing) should, in such an immense variety of parts in an animal, twice hit upon the same structure, so as to make a male and† female. Let us resume the former instance of the twenty-four letters thrown at random upon the ground. 'Tis a mathematical demonstration, that these twenty-four do admit of so many changes in their order, that they may make‡ such a long roll of differently ranged alphabets, not two of which are alike, that they could not all be exhausted, though a million million§ of writers should each write above a thousand alphabets a-day for the space of a million million‖ of years.[n] What strength of imagination can extend itself to embrace and comprehend such a prodigious diversity? And it is as infallibly certain, that suppose any particular order of the alphabet be¶ assigned, and the twenty-four letters be** cast at a venture, so as to fall in a line; it is so many million of millions odds to one against any single throw, that the assigned order will not be cast. Let us now suppose there be only a thousand constituent members in the body of a man (that we may take few enough), it is plain that the different position and situation of these thousand parts would make so many differing compounds and distinct species of animals. And if only twenty-four parts, as before, may be so multifariously placed and ordered as to make many millions of millions of differing rows, in the supposition of a thousand parts, how immense

[* by an habitual kind of chance; 1*st ed.* " by an habitual kind of chance, even above the number of all the impression."—D.]

[† and; 1*st ed.* " and a."—D.]

[‡ order, that they may make; 1*st ed.* " order, may make."—D.]

[§ million; 1*st ed.* " millions."—D.]

[‖ million; 1*st ed.* " millions."—D.]

[n] Tacquetti Arithmet. cap. de Progressione.

[¶ be; 1*st ed.* " to be."—D.]

[** be; 1*st ed.* " to be."—D.]

must that capacity of variation be! even beyond all thought and denomination, to be expressed only in mute figures, whose multiplied powers are beyond the narrowness of language, and drown the imagination in astonishment and confusion! especially if we observe that the variety of the alphabet considered above was in mere longitude only, but the thousand parts of our bodies may be diversified by situation in all the dimensions of solid bodies; which multiplies all over and over again, and overwhelms the fancy in a new abyss of unfathomable number. Now, it is demonstratively certain, that it is all this odds to one, against any particular trial, that no one man could, by casual production, be framed like another (as the Atheists suppose thousands to be in several regions of the earth); and I think 'tis rather more odds than less, that no one female could be added to a male, inasmuch as that most necessary difference of sex is a higher token of divine wisdom and skill, above all the power of fortuitous hits, than the very similitude of both sexes in the other parts of the body. And *again*, we must consider that the vast imparity of this odds against the accidental likeness of two casual formations is never lessened and diminished by trying and casting. 'Tis above a hundred to one against any particular throw, that you do not cast any given set of faces with four cubical dice, because there are so many several combinations of the six faces of four dice. Now, after you have cast all the hundred trials* but one, 'tis still as much odds at the last remaining time as it was at the first; for blind insensible chance cannot grow cunning by many experiments, neither have the preceding casts any influence upon those that come after. So that if this chance of the Atheists should have essayed in vain to make a species for a million million† of ages, 'tis still as many millions odds against that formation as it was at the first moment in the beginning of things. How incredible is it, therefore, that it should hit upon two productions alike, within so short duration of the world, ac-

[* all the hundred trials; 1*st ed.* "all the trials."—D.]
[† million; 1*st ed.* "millions."—D.]

cording to the doctrine of our Atheists![o] How much more, that it should do so within the compass of a hundred years, and of a small tract of ground, so that this male and female might come together! If any Atheist can be induced to stake his soul for a wager against such an inexhaustible disproportion, let him never hereafter accuse others of easiness and credulity.

(4.) But, fourthly, we will still make more ample concessions, and suppose, with the Atheist, that his chance has actually formed all animals in their terrestrial wombs. Let us see now how he will preserve them to maturity of birth. What climate will he cherish them in, that they be not inevitably destroyed by moisture or cold? Where is that equability of nine months' warmth to be found? that uniform warmth, which is so necessary even in the incubation of birds, much more in the time of gestation of viviparous animals? I know his party have placed this great scene in Egypt, or somewhere between the two tropics.[p] Now, not to mention the cool of the nights, which alone would destroy the conceptions; 'tis known that all those countries have either incessant rains every year for whole months together, or are quite laid under water by floods from the higher grounds; which would certainly corrupt and putrefy all the teeming wombs of the earth, and extinguish the whole brood of *embryons* by untimely abortions.

(5.) But, fifthly, we will still be more obliging to this Atheist, and grant him his petition, that nature may bring forth the young infants vitally into the world. Let us see now what sustenance, what nurses, he hath provided for them. If we consider the present constitution of nature, we must affirm, that most species must have been lost for want of fostering and feeding. 'Tis a great mistake, that* man

[o] Lucret. v. [331.—D.]

Verum, ut opinor, habet novitatem summa, recensque
Natura est mundi neque pridem exordia cepit.

[p] Cesalpin. Berigard.

[* mistake, that; 1*st ed.* " mistake that, that."—D.]

only comes weak and helpless into the world; whereas 'tis apparent that, excepting fish and insects (and not all of them neither), there are very few or no creatures that can provide for themselves at first without the assistance of parents. So that, unless they suppose mother earth to be a great animal, and to have nurtured up her young offspring with a conscious tenderness and providential care, there is no possible help for it but they must have been doubly starved both with hunger and cold.

(6.) But, sixthly, we will be yet more civil to this Atheist, and forgive him this difficulty also. Let us suppose the first animals maintained themselves with food, though we cannot tell how. But then, what security hath he made for the preservation of human race from the jaws of ravenous beasts? The divine writers* have acquainted us, that God at the beginning gave mankind *dominion* (an impressed awe and authority) *over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*[q] But in the Atheist's hypothesis there are no imaginable means of defence; for 'tis manifest, that so many beasts of prey, lions, tigers, wolves, and the like, being of the same age with man, and arriving at the top of their strength in one year or two, must needs have worried and devoured those forlorn brats of our Atheist's, even before they were weaned from the *foramina terræ*,[r] or at least in a short time after; since† all the carnivorous animals should‡ have multiplied exceedingly, by several generations, before those children that escaped at first could come to the age of puberty. So that men would always lessen, and their enemies always increase.

But some of them will here pretend, that Epicurus was out in this matter; and that they were not born mere infants out of those wombs of the earth, but men at their full growth, and in the prime of their strength. But, I pray, what should

[* writers; 1*st ed.* "writings."—D.]
[q] Gen. i. 28. [r] Lucret. lib. v. [809.—D.]
[† since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]
[‡ should; 1*st ed.* "would."—D.]

hinder those grown lusty infants from breaking sooner those membranes that involved them; as the shell of the egg is broken by the bird, and the *amnion** by the *fœtus?* Were the membranes so thick and tough, that the *fœtus* must stay there till he had teeth to eat through them, as young maggots do through a gall? *But let us answer these fools according to their folly.* Let us grant, that they were born with beards, and in the full time of manhood. They are not yet in a† better condition; here are still many enemies against few, many *species* against one; and those enemies speedily multiplying in the second and third and much lower generations; whereas the sons of the first men must have a tedious time of childhood and adolescence, before they can either themselves assist their parents, or encourage them with new hopes of posterity. And we must consider withal, that (in the notion of Atheism) those savages were not then what civilised mankind is now, but *mutum et turpe pecus,* without language, without mutual society, without arms of offence, without houses or fortifications, an obvious and exposed prey to the ravage of devouring beasts; a most sorry and miserable plantation towards the peopling of a world.

And now that I have followed the Atheists through so many dark mazes of error and extravagance, having, to my knowledge, omitted nothing on their side that looks like a difficulty, nor proposed any thing in reply but what I myself really believe to be a just and solid answer; I shall here close up the apostle's argument of the existence of God from the consideration of human nature. And I appeal to all sober and impartial judges of what hath been delivered, whether those noble faculties of our souls may be only a mere sound and echo from the clashing of senseless atoms, or rather indubitably must proceed from a spiritual substance of a heavenly and divine extraction? whether these admirable fabrics of our bodies shall be ascribed to the fatal mo-

[* *amnion*; 1*st ed.* "*amnios.*"—D.] [† a; 1*st ed.* "any."—D.]

tions or fortuitous shufflings of blind matter; or rather, beyond controversy, to the wisdom and contrivance of the almighty Author of all things, *who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working?*[s] To whom, &c.

[s] Isaiah, xxviii. 29.

A

CONFUTATION OF ATHEISM

FROM THE

ORIGIN AND FRAME OF THE WORLD.

PART I.

SERMON VI.

Preached October the 3d, 1692.

ACTS, xiv. 15, &c.

That ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

ALL the arguments that can be brought, or can be demanded, for the existence of God, may, perhaps not absurdly, be reduced to three general heads; the first of which will include all the proofs from the vital and intelligent portions of the universe, the organical bodies of the various animals, and the immaterial souls of men. Which living and understanding substances, as they make incomparably the most considerable and noble part of the naturally known and visible creation, so they do the most clearly and cogently demonstrate to philosophical inquirers the necessary self-existence, and omnipotent power, and unsearchable wisdom, and boundless beneficence of their Maker. This first topic, therefore, was very

fitly and divinely made use of by our apostle in his conference with philosophers and that inquisitive people of Athens; the latter *spending their time in nothing else, but either to tell or hear* some new thing*;[a] and the other in nothing but† to call in question the most evident truths that were delivered and received of old. And these arguments we have hitherto pursued in their utmost latitude and extent. So that now we shall proceed to the second head, or the proofs of a Deity from the inanimate part of the world; since‡ even natural reason, as well as§ holy Scripture, assures us, that *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work*;[b] that *he made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding*;[c] that *he commanded, and they were created; he hath also established them for ever and ever*;[d] *he covereth the heavens*|| *with clouds, he prepareth rain for the earth*,[e] *he crowneth the year with his goodness*.[f]

These reasons for God's existence, from the frame and system of the world, as they are equally true with the former, so they have always been more popular and plausible to the illiterate part of mankind; insomuch as the Epicureans,[g] and some others, have observed, that men's con-

[* *or hear*; 1*st ed.* "*or to hear.*"—D.] [a] Chap. xvii. ver. 21.
[† in nothing but; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]
[‡ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]
[§ as; 1*st ed.* "as the."—D.]
[b] Psal. xix. 1. [c] Jer. li. 15. [d] Psal. cxlviii. 5.
[|| *heavens*; 1*st ed.* "*heaven.*"—D.] [e] Psal. cxlvii. 8. [f] Psal. lxv. 11.
[g] Lucret. lib. v. [1182.—D.]

Præterea, cœli rationes ordine certo,
Et varia annorum cernebant tempora verti.

and lib. vi. [57.—D.]

Nam bene qui didicere Deos securum agere ævum,
Si tamen interea mirantur, &c.

Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. ii. [cap. 38. ed. Dav.—D.] Quis hunc hominem dixerit, qui cum tam certos cœli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, &c. Plutarch. de Plac. Phil. i. 6. [*Mor.* t. iv. p. 361. ed. Wyttenb.—D.] Θεοῦ γὰρ ἔννοιαν ἔσχον ἀπὸ τῶν φαινομένων ἀστέρων, ὁρῶντες τούτους μεγάλης συμφωνίας ὄντας αἰτίους, καὶ τεταγμένας ἡμέραν τε καὶ νύκτα, χειμῶνά τε καὶ θέρος, ἀνατολάς τε καὶ δυσμάς.

templating the most ample arch of the firmament, the innumerable multitude of the stars, the regular rising and setting of the sun, the periodical and constant vicissitudes of day and night, and seasons of the year, and the other affections of meteors and heavenly bodies, was the principal and almost only ground and occasion that the notion of a God came first into the world; making no mention of the former proof from the frame of human nature, *that in God we live, and move, and have our being.* Which argument being so natural and internal* to mankind, doth nevertheless (I know not how) seem more remote and obscure to the generality of men, who are readier to fetch a reason from the immense distance of the starry heavens and the outmost walls of the world, than seek one at home, within themselves, in their own faculties and constitutions. So that hence we may perceive how prudently that was waved, and the second here insisted on by St. Paul to the rude and simple semi-barbarians of Lycaonia: *he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.* Which words we shall now interpret in a large and free acceptation; so that this *second* theme may comprehend all the brute inanimate matter of the universe, as the *former* comprised all visible creatures in the world, that have understanding, or sense, or vegetable life. These two arguments are the voices of nature, the unanimous suffrages of all real beings and substances created, that are naturally knowable without revelation. And if, lastly, in the *third* place, we can evince the divine existence from the adjuncts and circumstances of human life; if we find in all ages, in all civilised nations, an universal belief and worship of a divinity; if we find many unquestionable records of supernatural and miraculous effects; if we find many faithful relations of prophecies punctually accomplished; of prophecies so well attested, above the suspicion of falsehood; so remote, and particular, and unlikely

[* internal; 1*st ed.* "intrinsical."—D.]

to come to pass, beyond the possibility of good guessing, or the mere foresight of human wisdom; if we find a most warrantable tradition, that *at sundry times and in divers manners God spake unto mankind by his prophets, and by his Son, and his apostles,* who have delivered to us in sacred writings a clearer revelation of his divine nature and will; if, I say, this third topic from human testimony be found agreeable to the standing vote and attestation of nature, what further proofs can be demanded or desired? What fuller evidence can our adversaries require, since* all the classes of known beings are summoned to appear? Would they have us bring more witnesses than the all of the world? and will they not stand to the grand verdict and determination of the universe? They are incurable infidels that persist to deny a Deity; when all creatures in the world, as well spiritual as corporeal, all from human race to the lowest of insects, *from the cedar of Libanus to the moss upon the wall,* from the vast globes of the sun and planets to the smallest particles of dust, do declare their absolute dependence upon the first author and fountain of all being, and motion, and life, the only eternal and self-existent God; with whom inhabit all majesty, and wisdom, and goodness, for ever and ever.

But, before I enter upon this argument from the origin and frame of the world, it will not be amiss to premise some particulars that may serve for an illustration of the text, and be a proper introduction to the following discourses.†

As the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, were preaching the Gospel at Lystra,[h] a city of Lycaonia in Asia the Less, among the rest of their auditors there was a lame cripple from his birth, whom Paul commanded, with a loud voice, *to stand upright on his feet;* and immediately, by a miraculous energy, *he leaped and walked.* Let us compare the present circumstances with those of my former text, and observe the remarkable difference in the apostle's proceedings. No

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.]

[† to the following discourses; 1*st ed.* "to our discourse thereupon."—D.]

[h] [Acts, xiv.] ver. 8.

question but there were several cripples at Athens, so very large and populous a city; and, if that could be dubious, I might add, that the very climate disposed the inhabitants to impotency in the feet: *Atthide tentantur gressus, oculique in Achæis Finibus*[l]—are the words of Lucretius; which 'tis probable he transcribed from Epicurus, a Gargettian and native of Athens, and therefore an unquestionable evidence in a matter of this nature. Neither is it likely that all the Athenian cripples should escape the sight of St. Paul, since* *he disputed there in the market daily with them that met him.*[k] How comes it to pass, then, that we do not hear of a like miracle in that city; which, one would think, might have greatly conduced to the apostle's design, and have converted, or at least confuted and put to silence, the Epicureans and Stoics? But it is not difficult to give an account of this seeming disparity, if we attend to the qualifications of the lame person at Lystra, whom Paul stedfastly beholding, and *perceiving that he had* FAITH *to be healed, said, with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet.*[l] This is the necessary condition that was always required by our Saviour and his apostles: *And Jesus said unto the blind man, Receive thy sight, thy* FAITH *hath saved thee;*[m] and to the woman that had the issue of blood, *Daughter, be of good comfort; thy* FAITH *hath made thee whole: go in peace.*[n] 'Twas want of FAITH in our Saviour's countrymen, which hindered him from shedding among them the salutary emanations of his divine virtue: *And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.*[o] There were many diseased persons in his own country, but very few that were rightly disposed for a supernatural cure. St. Mark hath a very observable expression upon the same occasion: *And he* COULD *do no mighty works*† *there, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.*[p] *Καὶ οὐκ ΗΔΥΝΑΤΟ ἐκεῖ*

[k] [Acts, xvii.] ver. 17.
[l] Lucret. lib. vi. [1114.—D.]
[n] [Luke,] viii. 48.
[o] Matt. xiii. 58.
[p] Mark, vi. 5.
[* since; 1st ed. "seeing."—D.]
[† works; 1st ed. "work."—D.]
[l] Ver. 9.
[m] Luke, xviii. 42.

οὐδεμίαν δύναμιν ποιῆσαι. We read in St. Luke, v. 17: *And the* POWER (δύναμις) *of the Lord was present to heal them.* And chap. vi. ver. 19: *And the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went* virtue (δύναμις) *out of him, and healed them all.* Now, since δύναμις and ἠδύνατο are* words of the same root and signification, shall we so interpret the evangelist, as if our Saviour had not *power* to work miracles among his unbelieving countrymen? This is the passage which that impious and impure Atheist Lucilio Vanino[q] singled out for his text, in his pretended and mock apology for the Christian religion; wickedly insinuating as if the prodigies of Christ were mere impostures, and acted by confederacy; and therefore, where the spectators were incredulous, and consequently watchful and suspicious, and not easily imposed on, he COULD do no mighty work there; there his arm was shortened, and his power and virtue too feeble for such supernatural effects. But the gross absurdity of this suggestion is no less conspicuous than the villanous blasphemy of it. For,† can it be credible to any rational person, that St. Mark could have that meaning? that he should tax his Lord and Saviour, whom he knew to be God Almighty, with deficiency of power? He *could* do no mighty works; that is, he *would* do none, because of their unbelief. There's a frequent change of those words in all languages of the world. And we may appeal with St. Chrysostom[r] to the common custom of speech, whatever country we live in. This, therefore, is the genuine sense of that expression: Christ *would* not heal their infirmities, because of the hardness and slowness of their hearts, in that they believed him not. And

[* Now, since δύναμις and ἠδύνατο are; 1*st ed.* "Seeing then that ἠδύνατο and δύναμις are."—D.]

[q] Vanini Dial. p. 439.

[† But the gross absurdity of this suggestion is no less conspicuous than the villanous blasphemy of it. For; 1*st ed.* "But the gross absurdity is no less conspicuous than the villanous blasphemy of this suggestion. For."—D.]

[r] Chrys. ad locum: τοῦτο δὲ καὶ ἐν κοινῇ συνηθείᾳ φυλαττόμενον ἴδοι τις ἄν. So, δύναμαι is *volo*, Acts, iv. 20; John, vii. 7: and θέλω is *possum*. Vid. Budæi Comm. Ling. Gr.

I think there is not one instance, in all the history of the New Testament, of a miracle done for any one's sake that did not believe Jesus to be a good person, and sent from God, and had not a disposition of heart fit to receive his doctrine. For, to believe he was the Messias and Son of God,[s] was not then absolutely necessary, nor rigidly exacted; the most signal of the prophecies being not yet fulfilled by him till his passion and resurrection. But, as I said, to obtain a miracle from him, it was necessary to believe him a good person, and sent from God.* Herod therefore hoped† in vain *to have seen some miracle done by him*:[t] and when *the Pharisees sought of him a sign from heaven, tempting him,* they received this disappointing answer, *Verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given to this generation.*[u] And we may observe in the Gospels, that where the persons themselves were incapable of actual faith, yet the friends and relations of those dead that were raised again to life, of those lunatics and demoniacs that were restored to their right minds, were such as *sought after him, and believed on him.*[v] And as to the healing of Malchus's ear,[w] it was a peculiar and extraordinary case; for, though the person was wholly unworthy of so gracious a cure, yet, in the account of the meek Lamb of God, it was a kind of injury done to him by the fervidness of St. Peter, who knew not yet what spirit he was of, and that his Master's kingdom was not of this world. But, besides this obvious meaning of the words of the evangelist, there may perhaps be a sublimer sense couched under the expression. For, in the divine nature, *will* and *can* are frequently the selfsame thing; and freedom and necessity, that are opposites here below, do in heaven above most amicably agree and join hands together. And

[s] See John, ch. ix. and Matt. xvi. 14.

[* But, as I said, to obtain a miracle from him, it was necessary to believe him a good person, and sent from God; *not in 1st ed.*—D.]

[† Herod therefore hoped; *1st ed.* "So Herod *hoped.*"—D.]

[t] Luke, xxiii. 8.

[u] Mark, viii. 12.

[v] Matt. xvii. 15. xv. 22. Luke, viii. 4.

[w] Luke, xxii. 51.

this is not a restraint or impotency, but the royal prerogative of the most absolute King of kings, that he *wills* to do nothing but what he *can*, and that he *can* do nothing which is repugnant to his divine wisdom and essential goodness. God *cannot* do what is unjust, nor say what is untrue, nor promise with a mind to deceive. Our Saviour, therefore, *could* do no mighty work in a country of unbelievers, because it was not fit and reasonable. And so we may say of our apostle, who was acted by the Spirit of God, that he *could* do no miracle at Athens, and that because of their *unbelief*. There is a very sad and melancholy account of the success of his stay there. *Howbeit,* CERTAIN *men clave unto him, and believed*;[x] a more diminutive expression than if they had been called *a few*. And we do not find that he ever visited this city again, as he did several others where there were a competent number of disciples. And indeed, if we consider the genius and condition of the Athenians at that time; how vicious and corrupt they were; how conceited of their own wit, and science, and politeness, as if they* had invented corn and oil, and distributed them to the world, and had first† taught civility, and learning, and religion, and laws, to the rest of mankind;[y] how they were puffed up‡ with the fulsome flatteries of their§ philosophers, and sophists, and poets of the stage; we cannot much wonder, that they should so little regard an unknown stranger that preached unto them *an unknown God*.

I am aware of an objection, that, for ought we can now affirm, St. Paul might have done several miracles at Athens, though they be not related by St. Luke. I confess I am far from asserting, that all the miracles of our Saviour are re-

[x] Τινὲς δὲ ἄνδρες, ch. xvii. ver 34.

[* as if they; 1st ed. "that they."—D.]

[† and had first; 1st ed. "that they first."—D.]

[y] Cicero pro Flacco. Adsunt Athenienses, unde humanitas, doctrina, religio, fruges, jura, leges ortæ atque in omnes terras distributæ putantur. Isoc. Paneg. Diod. Sic. 13.

[‡ how they were puffed up; 1st ed. "how swoln and puffed up."—D.]

[§ their; *not in* 1st ed.—D.]

corded in the Gospels, or of his apostles in the Acts.[z] But nevertheless, in the present circumstances, I think we may conjecture, that if any prodigy and wonder had been performed by our apostle among those curious and pragmatical Athenians, it would have had such a consequence as might have deserved some place in sacred history, as well as this before us at Lystra, where, *when the people saw what Paul had done, they lift up their voices, saying, in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men;*[a] and the priests* came with oxen and garlands, and would have sacrificed to them, as to Jupiter and Mercurius. That this was a common opinion among the Gentiles, that the gods sometimes assumed human shape, and conversed upon earth as strangers and travellers, must needs be well known to any one that ever looks into the ancient poets. Even the vagabond life of Apollonius Tyanensis shall be called by a bigoted sophist, ἐπιδημία ἐς ἀνθρώπους θεοῦ,[b] a peregrination of a god among men. And when the Lystrians say,† ὁμοιωθέντες ἀνθρώποις, *gods*‡ *in the shape of men*, they mean not that§ the gods had other figure than human even in heaven itself, (for that was the received doctrine of most of the vulgar heathen, and of some sects of philosophers too,) but that they, who in their own nature were of a more august stature and glorious visage, had now contracted and debased themselves into the narrower dimensions and meaner aspects of mortal men. Now, when the apostles heard of this intended sacrifice, *they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,*[c] &c. St. Chrysostom upon this place hath a very odd exposition. He inquires why Paul and Barnabas do now at last reprove the people, when the priest and victims were even at the gates, and not presently

[z] See John, xxi. 25. and 2 Cor. xii. 12.

[a] [Acts, xiv.] ver. 11. [* priests; 1*st ed.* "priest."—D.]

[b] Eunapius, cap. ii. [† the Lystrians say; 1*st ed.* "they say."—D.]

[‡ *gods; not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[§ they mean not that; 1*st ed.* "we must not so understand it, as if they believed that."—D.]

[c] Ver. 14.

when they lift up their voice and called them gods: for which he assigns this reason, that because they spoke *Λυκαονιστὶ, in the Lycaonian tongue,* the Apostles did not then understand them; but now they perceived their meaning by the oxen and the garlands.[d] Indeed, it is very probable that the Lycaonian language was very different from the Greek, as we may gather* from Ephorus, and Strabo[e] that cites him, who make almost all the inland nations† of Asia Minor to be barbarians; and from Stephanus Byzantius,[f] who acquaints us that ἄρκευθος, a juniper-tree, was called δέλβεια in the speech of the Lycaonians, ἐν τῇ τῶν Λυκαόνων φωνῇ. But, notwithstanding, we can by no means allow that the great apostle of the Gentiles should be ignorant of that language; he that so solemnly affirms of himself, *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all;*[g] and at‡ the first effusion of this heavenly gift, *the dwellers in Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia,* (some of them near neighbours to the Lycaonians,) *heard the apostles speak in their several tongues the wonderful works of God.*[h] And how could these two apostles have§ preached the Gospel to the Lystrians,[i] if they did not use the common language of the country? And to what purpose did they *cry out* and speak to them,[j] if the hearers could not apprehend? or how could they by those *sayings restrain the people* from sacrificing,[k] if what they said was not intelligible? But it will be asked, why then were the apostles so slow and backward in reclaiming them? and what can be answered to the query of St. Chrysostom? When I consider the circum-

[d] Ἀλλ' οὐκ ἦν τοῦτο οὐδέπω δῆλον, τῇ γὰρ οἰκείᾳ φωνῇ ἐφθέγγοντο· . . . . διὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς ἔλεγον, ἐπειδὴ δὲ εἶδον τὰ στέμματα, τότε ἐξελθόντες διέῤῥηξαν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν. Chrys. ad loc.

[* gather; 1st ed. "conclude."—D.] * Ephorus apud Strab. lib. xiv.

[† the inland nations; 1st ed. "the nations."—D.]

[f] Steph. voce Δέρβη. [g] 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

[‡ and at; 1st ed. "and yet at."—D.] [h] Acts, ii. [9—11.]

[§ And how could these two apostles have; 1st ed. "And again how could they have."—D.]

[i] [Acts, xiv.] ver. 7. [j] Ver. 15. [k] Ver. 18.

stances and nature of this affair, I am persuaded they did not hear that discourse of the people. For I can hardly conceive, that men under such apprehensions as the Lystrians then were, in the dread presence and under the very nod of the almighty Jupiter, not an idol of wood or stone, but the real and very God (as the Athenians made their compliment to Demetrius Poliorcetes[l]), should exclaim in his sight and hearing: this, I say, seems not probable nor natural; nor is it affirmed in the text: but they might buzz and whisper it one to another,[m] and silently* withdrawing from the presence of the apostles, they then *lift up their voices*, and noised† it about the city. So that Paul and Barnabas were‡ but just then informed of their idolatrous design, when they rent their clothes, and ran§ in among them, and expostulated‖ with them; *Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you;*[n] ὁμοιοπαθεῖς ὑμῖν, *mortal* men like yourselves,[o] as it is judiciously rendered in the ancient Latin version; otherwise the *antithesis* is not so plain: for the heathen theology made even the gods themselves subject to human passions and appetites, to anger, sorrow, lust, hunger, wounds, lameness, &c. and exempted them from nothing but death and old age:[p] *and we preach*¶ *unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities* (i. e. idols) *unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways:* πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, not *all nations*, but *all the heathen* (the word HEATHEN comes from

[l] Οὐ ξύλινον, οὐδὲ λίθινον, ἀλλ' ἀληθινόν. Athenæus, vi. 15. [t. ii. p. 472. ed. Schw.—D.]

[m] Ὧδε δέ τις εἶπεσκεν ἰδὼν ἐς πλησίον ἄλλον. [Hom. *Il.* ii. 271.—D.]

[* silently; 1*st ed.* "tacitly."—D.] [† noised; 1*st ed.* "noise."—D.]

[‡ were; 1*st ed.* "are."—D.] [§ ran; 1*st ed.* "run."—D.]

[‖ expostulated; 1*st ed.* "expostulate."—D.]

[n] [Acts, xiv.] ver. 15.

[o] Mortales sumus similes vobis homines. So εἴ τι πάθω, *if I die*; a common expression in Greek writers.

[p] ——————— αἲ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὃς
Εἴην ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήραος ἤματα πάντα. Hom. [*Il.* viii. 538.—D.]

[¶ *and we preach*; 1*st ed.* "and preach."—D.]

ἔθνη), *all the Gentiles,*[q] distinguished from the Jews; as the same words are translated Rom. xv. 11, and 2 Tim. iv. 17; and ought to have been so, Rom. i. 5, and xvi. 26; but much more in our text, which according to the present version seems to carry a very obscure, if not erroneous meaning; but by a true interpretation is very easy and intelligible: that hitherto God had suffered all the Gentiles to walk in their own ways; and excepting the Jews only, whom he chose for his own people, and prescribed them a law, he permitted the rest of mankind to walk by the mere light of nature, without the assistance of revelation: but that now, in the fulness of time, he had even to the Gentiles also *sent salvation,* and *opened the door of faith,* and *granted repentance unto life.* So that these words of our apostle are exactly coincident with that remarkable passage* in his discourse to the Athenians: *And the* (past) *times of this ignorance* (of the Gentile world) *God winked at* (or overlooked[r]); *but now commandeth all men every where to repent.*[s] And *nevertheless,* says our text,† even in that gloomy state of heathenism, *he left not himself without witness, in that he did good,* ἀγαθοποιῶν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, always *doing good from heaven,* (which seems to be the genuine punctuation, and is authorised by the Syriac interpreters,[t]) *and gave us rain and*‡ *fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.* Even the very Gentiles§ might *feel after him and find him;* since the‖ admirable frame of *heaven, and earth, and sea,* and the munificent provision of *food* and sustenance for his creatures, did competently set forth his eternal power and Godhead; so

[q] See Acts, iv. 27; xiv. 5; xxvi. 17. Gal. ii. 14.

[* that remarkable passage; 1*st ed.* "that so much controverted passage."—D.]

[r] ὑπεριδών. [s] Acts, xvii. 30. [† says our text; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[t] So כד עבד חוא לחון טבתא מן שמיא ומחת וחוא ממרא that they read ἀγαθοποιῶν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ ὑετὸν δ. Horat. [*Sat.* i. 5. 102.—D.]

Nec, si quid miri faciat natura, Deos id
Tristes ex alto cœli demittere tecto.

[‡ *rain and;* 1*st ed.* "*rain from heaven and.*"—D.]

[§ the very Gentiles; 1*st ed.* "the Gentiles."—D.]

[‖ since the; 1*st ed.* "seeing that the."—D.]

that stupid idolaters and profane Atheists were then and always without excuse.*

Our adversaries have used the same methods to elude the present argument from the frame of the world, as they have done to evade the former from the origin of mankind. *Some* have maintained, that this world hath thus existed from all eternity in its present form and condition; but *others* say, that† the forms of particular worlds are generable and corruptible; so that our present system cannot have sustained an infinite duration already gone and expired: but however, say they, body‡ in general, the common *basis* and matter of all worlds and beings, is self-existent and eternal; which, being naturally divided into innumerable little particles or atoms, eternally endued with an ingenite and inseparable power of motion, by their omnifarious concursions, and combinations, and coalitions, produce§ successively (or at once, if matter be infinite) an infinite number of worlds; and amongst the rest there arose|| this visible complex system of heaven and earth. And thus far they do agree; but then they differ about the cause and mode of the production of worlds, some ascribing it to fortune, and others to mechanism or nature. 'Tis true, the astrological Atheists will¶ give us no trouble in the present dispute; because they cannot form a peculiar *hypothesis* here, as they have done before about the origination of animals. For though some of them are so vain and senseless, as to pretend to a *thema mundi*, a calculated scheme of the nativity of our world; yet it exceeds even their absurdity, to suppose the zodiac and planets to be efficient of, and antecedent to, themselves; or to exert any influences before they were in being. So that, to refute all

[* without excuse; 1*st ed.* "without excuse: which is the scope of these discourses."—D.]

[† say, that; 1*st ed.* "do as stiffly affirm that."—D.]

[‡ however, say they, body; 1*st ed.* "however, that body."—D.]

[§ produce; 1*st ed.* "there emergeth."—D.]

[|| amongst the rest there arose; 1*st ed.* "among the rest arose."—D.]

[¶ 'Tis true, the astrological Atheists will; 1*st ed.* "Indeed, as for the astrological Atheists, they will."—D.]

possible explications that the Atheists have or can propose, I shall proceed in this following method:

I. First, I will prove it impossible that the primary parts of our world, the sun and the planets, with their regular motions and revolutions, should have subsisted eternally in the present or a like frame and condition.

II. Secondly, I will shew, that matter abstractly and absolutely considered, cannot have subsisted eternally; or, if it has, yet motion cannot have coexisted eternally with it, as* an inherent property and essential attribute of the Atheist's god, MATTER.

III. Thirdly, though universal matter should have endured† from everlasting, divided into infinite particles in the Epicurean way; and though motion should have been‡ coeval and coeternal with it; yet those§ particles or atoms could never of themselves, by omnifarious kinds of motion, whether fortuitous or mechanical, have fallen or been disposed into this or a like visible system.‖

IV. And, fourthly, *a posteriori*, that the order and beauty of the inanimate parts of the world, the discernible ends and final causes of them, the τὸ βελτίον, or a meliority above what was necessary to be, do evince, by a reflex argument, that it is the product and workmanship, not of blind mechanism or blinder chance, but of an intelligent and benign Agent, *who by his excellent wisdom made the heavens and earth, and gives rain*¶ *and fruitful seasons for the service of man.*

[* cannot have subsisted eternally; or, if it has, yet motion cannot have coexisted eternally with it, as; 1*st ed.* "cannot have borne an infinite duration now past and expired; as also that motion cannot have coexisted eternally, as."—D.]

[† Thirdly, though universal matter should have endured; 1*st ed.* "Thirdly, that though we allow them, that universal matter hath endured."—D.]

[‡ and though motion should have been; 1*st ed.* "and that motion hath been."—D.]

[§ those; 1*st ed.* "these."—D.]

[‖ system; 1*st ed.* "system; though a supposed infinite duration of the atoms and their motions should already be expired and gone."—D.]

[¶ *rain;* 1*st ed.* "*rains.*"—D.]

I shall speak to the two first propositions in my present discourse; reserving the latter for other opportunities.*

I. First, therefore:† that the present or a like frame of the world hath not subsisted from everlasting. We will readily concede, that a thing may be truly eternal, though its duration be terminated at one end. For so we affirm human souls to be immortal and eternal, though *ἦν ὅτε οὐκ ἦσαν*, there was a time when they were nothing; and therefore their infinite duration will always be bounded at one extreme by that first beginning of existence. So that, for ought appears as yet, the revolutions of the earth and other planets about the sun, though they be limited at one end by the present revolution, may nevertheless have been infinite and eternal without any beginning. But then we must consider, that this duration of human souls is only *potentially* infinite. For their eternity consists only in an endless capacity of continuance without ever ceasing to be, in a boundless futurity that can never be exhausted, or all of it be past and present. But their duration can never be *positively* and *actually* eternal; because it is most manifest, that no moment can ever be assigned, wherein it shall be true, that such a soul hath then actually sustained an infinite duration. For that supposed infinite duration will, by the very supposition, be limited at two extremes, though never so remote asunder, and consequently must needs be finite. Wherefore the true nature and notion of a soul's eternity is this: that the future moments of its duration can never be all *past and present*, but still there will be a futurity and potentiality of more for ever and ever. So that we evidently perceive from this instance, that‡ whatever successive duration shall be bounded at one end, and be all *past and present*, for that reason must be finite.§ Which necessarily evinceth,

[* I shall speak to the two first propositions in my present discourse; reserving the latter for other opportunities; *not in 1st ed.*—D.]

[† First, therefore; *1st ed.* "And first."—D.]

[‡ instance, that; *1st ed.* "instance of a soul, that."—D.]

[§ for that reason must be finite; *1st ed.* "must come infinitely short of infinity."—D.]

that the present or a like world can never have been eternal, or that there cannot have been infinite past revolutions of a planet about a sun. For this supposed infinity is terminate* at one extreme by the *present* revolution, and all the other revolutions are confessedly past; so that the whole duration is bounded at one end, and all *past and present;* and therefore cannot have been infinite, by what was proved before. And this will shew us the vast difference between the false successive eternity backwards, and the real one to come. For, consider the *present* revolution of the earth as the bound and confine of them both. God Almighty, if he so pleaseth, may continue this motion to perpetuity in infinite revolutions to come; because futurity is inexhaustible, and can never be all spent or† run out by *past and present* moments. But then, if we look backwards from this present revolution, we may‡ apprehend the impossibility of infinite revolutions on that side; because all are already *past,* and so were once actually *present,* and consequently are finite, by the argument before. For surely we cannot conceive a preteriteness (if I may say so) still backwards *in infinitum,* that never was present, as we can an endless futurity that never will be present. So that though one is potentially infinite, yet nevertheless the other is actually§ finite. And this|| reasoning doth necessarily conclude against the past infinite duration of all successive motion and mutable beings: but it doth not at all¶ affect the eternal existence of God,** in whose invariable nature there is no past or†† future; who is omnipresent not only as to space, but as to duration; and with respect to such omnipresence, it is certain and manifest, that succession and motion are mere impossibilities, and repugnant in the very terms.

[* terminate; 1*st ed.* "terminated."—D.]
[† or; 1*st ed.* "and."—D.] [‡ may; 1*st ed.* "do."—D.]
[§ actually; 1*st ed.* "positively."—D.]
[|| And this; 1*st ed.* "And though this."—D.]
[¶ but it doth not at all; 1*st ed.* "yet it doth not all."—D.]
[** God; 1*st ed.* "the adorable Divinity."—D.]
[†† or; 1*st ed.* "nor."—D.]

And, secondly, though what hath been now said hath given us so clear a view of the nature of successive duration, as to make more arguments needless; yet I shall here briefly shew how our adversaries' hypothesis, without any outward opposition, destroys and confutes* itself. For let us suppose infinite revolutions of the earth about the sun to be already gone and expired; I take it to be self-evident, that, if none of those past revolutions has been infinite ages ago, all the revolutions put together cannot make† the duration of infinite ages: it follows, therefore, from this supposition, that there may be some one assignable revolution among them, that was‡ at an infinite distance from the present. But it is self-evident likewise, that no one past revolution could§ be infinitely distant from the present; for then an infinite or unbounded duration may be bounded at two extremes by two annual revolutions; which is absurd and a contradiction. And again, upon the same supposition of an eternal past duration of the world, and of infinite annual revolutions of the earth about the sun; I would ask concerning the monthly revolutions of the moon about the earth, or the diurnal ones of the earth upon its own axis, both which, by the very hypothesis, are coeval with the former, whether these also have been finite or infinite? Not finite to be sure; because then a finite number would be greater than an infinite, as 12 or 365 are more than an unit. Nor infinite neither; for then two or three infinites would exceed one another, as a year exceeds a month, or both exceed a day. So that both ways the supposition is repugnant and impossible.

And thirdly, the arguments already used,[u] from the gradual increase of mankind, from the known plantations of most countries, from the recent invention of letters and arts, &c. do conclude as forcibly against the eternity of the world as against infinite generations of human race. For if

[* without any outward opposition destroys and confutes; 1*st ed.* "doth without any outward opposition destroy and confute."—D.]

[† make; 1*st ed.* "make up."—D.]

[‡ was; 1*st ed.* "is."—D.]

[§ could; 1*st ed.* "can."—D.]

[u] Serm. iii.

the present frame of the earth be supposed eternal, by the same notion they make mankind to have been coeternal with it. For otherwise this eternal earth, after she had been eternally barren and desolate, must at last have spontaneously produced mankind, without new cause from without, or any alteration in her own texture; which is so gross an absurdity, that even no Atheist hath yet affirmed it. So that it evidently follows, since mankind had a beginning, that the* present form of the earth, and therefore the whole system of the world, had a beginning also.

Which being proved and established, we are now enabled to give answers to some bold queries and objections of Atheists; that since† God is described as a being infinitely powerful and perfectly good; and that these attributes were essential to him from all eternity; why did he not‡ by his power, for the more ample communication of his goodness, create the world from eternity,§ if he created it at all? or at least many millions of ages ago, before this short span of duration of five or six thousand years? To the first we reply, that since we have discovered an internal‖ and natural impossibility that a successive duration should be actually eternal; 'tis to us a flat contradiction, that the world should have been¶ created from everlasting. And therefore it is no affront to the divine omnipotence, if by reason of the formal incapacity and repugnancy of the thing we conceive,** that the world could not possibly have been made from all eternity, even by God himself. Which gives an answer to the second question, Why created so lately? For, if it could

[* since mankind had a beginning, that the; 1*st ed.* " that if mankind had a beginning, the."—D.]

[† since; 1*st ed.* " seeing."—D.]

[‡ he not; 1*st ed.* " not he."—D.]

[§ from eternity; 1*st ed.* " eternally."—D.]

[‖ since we have discovered an internal; 1*st ed.* " seeing we have discovered an intrinsical."—D.]

[¶ 'tis to us a flat contradiction, that the world should have been; 1*st ed.* " it is no less than a contradiction to itself, that the world should be."—D.]

[** conceive; 1*st ed.* " aver."—D.]

not be created from eternity,* there can no instant be assigned for its creation in time, though never so many myriads and millions of years since, but the same query may† be put, Why but now, and Why so late? for even before that remoter period God was eternally existent, and might have made the world as many myriads of ages still backwards before that: and consequently this objection is absurd and unreasonable. For else, if it was good and allowable, it would eternally hinder God from exerting his creative power, because he could never make a world so early, at any given moment, but it may‡ truly be said, he could have created it sooner. Or if they think there§ may be a soonest instant of possible creation, yet, since‖ all instants have an equal pretence to it in human apprehension, why may not this recent production of the world, according to sacred authority, be supposed to be that soonest? At least it may make that claim to it that cannot be baffled by their arguments, which¶ equally conclude against all claims, against any conceivable beginning of the world.

And so, when they profanely ask, Why did not this supposed Deity, if he really made the heavens, make them boundless and immense, a fit and honourable mansion for an infinite and incomprehensible being; or at least vastly more ample and magnificent than this narrow cottage of a world? we may make them this answer: *First*, it seems** impossible, and a contradiction, that a created world should be infinite;†† because it is the nature of quantity‡‡ and motion, that they can never be actually and positively infinite: they have a power indeed§§ and a capacity of being increased

[* it could not be created from eternity; 1*st ed.* "it be impossible to have been created eternally."—D.]
[† may; 1*st ed.* "might."—D.] [‡ may; 1*st ed.* "might."—D.]
[§ there; 1*st ed.* "that there."—D.]
[‖ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]
[¶ their arguments, which; 1*st ed.* "such arguments as."—D.]
[** it seems; 1*st ed.* "that it is."—D.]
[†† infinite; 1*st ed.* "immense."—D.]
[‡‡ quantity; 1*st ed.* "space."—D.] [§§ indeed; 1*st ed.* "only."—D.]

without end; so as no quantity* can be assigned so vast, but still a larger may be imagined; no motion so swift or languid, but a greater velocity or slowness may still be conceived; no positive duration of it so long, than which a longer† may not be supposed: but even that very power hinders them from being actually infinite.‡ From whence, *secondly*, it follows, that though the world was a million of times more spacious and ample than even astronomy supposes it, or yet another million bigger than that, and so on in infinite progression, yet still they might make the same exception world without end. For since§ God Almighty can do all that is possible, and quantity‖ hath always a possibility of being enlarged more and more,¶ he could never create so ample a world, but still it would be true, that he could have made a bigger; the fecundity of his creative power never growing barren, nor ever to be** exhausted. Now what may†† always be an exception against all possible worlds, can never be a just one against any whatsoever.

And when they scoffingly demand, Why would this imaginary Omnipotence make such mean pieces of workmanship? what an indigent and impotent thing is his principal creature man! would not boundless beneficence have communicated his divine perfections in the most eminent degrees? they may receive this reply; that we are far from such arrogance, as to pretend to the highest dignity, and be the chief of the whole creation: we believe an invisible world, and a scale of spiritual beings all nobler than ourselves: nor yet are we so low and base as their Atheism would depress us; not walking statues of clay, not the sons of brute earth,

[* as no quantity; 1*st ed.* "that no space."—D.]

[† longer; 1*st ed.* "more lasting."—D.]

[‡ but even that very power hinders them from being actually infinite; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[§ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]

[‖ quantity; 1*st ed.* "space."—D.]

[¶ more and more; 1*st ed.* "indefinitely."—D.]

[** nor ever to be; 1*st ed.* "nor being."—D.]

[†† may; 1*st ed.* "might."—D.]

whose final inheritance is death and corruption: we carry the image of God in us, a rational and immortal soul; and, though we be now indigent* and feeble, yet we aspire after eternal happiness, and firmly expect a great exaltation of all our natural powers. But whatsoever† was or can be made, whether *angels or archangels, cherubims or seraphims,* whether *thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers,* all the glorious host of heaven, must needs be finite, and imperfect, and dependent creatures: and God, out of the *exceeding greatness of his power,* is still able, without end, to create higher classes of beings. For where can we put a stop to the efficacy of the Almighty? or what can we assign for the highest of all possible finite perfections? There can be no such thing as‡ an *almost infinite;* there can be nothing next or second to an omnipotent God: *Nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum,*[v] as the heathen poet said excellently well of the supposed father of gods and men. The infinite distance between the Creator and the noblest of all creatures can never be measured nor exhausted by endless addition of finite degrees. So that no actual creature can ever be the most perfect of all possible creation. Which shews the folly of this query, that might always be demanded, let things be as they will; that would impiously and absurdly attempt to tie the arm of Omnipotence from doing any thing at all, because it can never do its utmost.

II. I proceed now to the second proposition, that neither matter universally and abstractly considered, nor motion, as its attribute and property, can have existed from all eternity.§ And to this I shall speak the more briefly, not only because it is an abstruse and metaphysical speculation, but because it is of|| far less moment and consequence than the rest:

[* indigent; 1*st ed.* "miserable."—D.]

[† But whatsoever; 1*st ed.* "But farther we affirm, that whatsoever."—D.]

[‡ thing as; 1*st ed.* "thing or notion as."—D.]

[v Horat. Car. i. 12.

[§ nor motion, as its attribute and property, can have existed from all eternity; 1*st ed.* "nor motion can have endured a past eternity."—D.]

[|| but because it is of; 1*st ed.* "but also of."—D.]

since* without this we can evince the existence of God from the origin and frame of the universe. For if the present or a like system of the world cannot possibly have been eternal;† and if without God[w] it could neither naturally nor fortuitously emerge out of a chaos;‡ we must necessarily have recourse to a Deity,[x] as the contriver and maker of heaven and earth; whether we suppose he created them out of nothing, or had the materials ready eternally to his hand. But nevertheless, because we are verily persuaded of the truth of this article, we shall briefly assign some reasons of our belief, in these following particulars.

First, *It is a thing possible, that matter may have been*§ *produced out of nothing.* It is urged as an universal maxim, that *nothing can proceed from nothing.* Now this we readily allow; and yet it will prove nothing against the possibility of creation. For, when they say, nothing from nothing, they must so understand it, as excluding all causes, both material and efficient. In which sense it is most evidently and infallibly true; being equivalent to this proposition, that nothing can make itself; or, nothing cannot bring its no-self out of nonentity into something. Which only expresses‖ thus much, that matter did not produce itself, or, that all substances did not emerge out of an universal nothing. Now, who ever talked at that rate? We do not say, the world was created from¶ nothing and by nothing; we assert an eternal God to have been the efficient cause of it. So that a creation of the world out of nothing by something, and by that something that includes in its nature a necessary existence and perfection of power, is certainly no contradic-

[* than the rest: since; 1*st ed.* "to us than the others: seeing that."—D.]

[† eternal; 1*st ed.* "eternal, by the first proposition."—D.]

[w] By the first proposition.

[‡ chaos; 1*st ed.* "chaos, by the third proposition."—D.]

[x] By the third proposition.

[§ *a thing possible, that matter may have been;* 1*st ed.* "no contradiction, that matter should be."—D.]

[‖ expresses; 1*st ed.* "proves."—D.]

[¶ say, the world was created from; 1*st ed.* "create the world from."—D.]

tion, nor opposes that common maxim. Whence it manifestly follows, that since* God may do any thing that implies not a contradiction; if there be such an essence as God, he may have created matter out of nothing, that is, have given an existence to matter, which† had no being before.

And, secondly, *It is very probable, that matter has been‡ actually created out of nothing.* In a former discourse we have proved sufficiently,ʏ that human souls are not mere modification of matter, but real and spiritual substances, that have as true an existence as our very bodies themselves. Now, no man, as I conceive, can seriously think that his own soul hath existed from all eternity. He cannot believe the stuff or materials of his soul to have been eternal, and the soul to have been made up of them at the time of his conception. For a human soul is no compound being; 'tis not made of particles, as our bodies are, but 'tis one simple homogeneous essence: neither can he think that the personality of his soul, with its faculties inherent in it, has existed eternally; this is against common sense, and it needs no refutation. Nay, though a man could be so extravagant as to hold this assertion, that his soul, his personal self, has been from everlasting, yet even this in the issue would be destructive to Atheism, since it supposes an eternal Being, endued with understanding and wisdom. We will take it then as a thing confessed, that the immaterial souls of men have been produced out of nothing.§ But if God hath

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.]

[† that is, have given an existence to matter, which; 1*st ed.* "or given that an existence, that."—D.]

[‡ And, secondly, *It is very probable, that matter has been*; 1*st ed.* "Secondly, some things have been."—D.]

ʏ Serm. ii.

[§ Now, no man, as I conceive, ... that the immaterial souls of men have been produced out of nothing; 1*st ed.* "Now, no man in his wits can seriously think, that his own soul hath existed from all eternity; not the stuff or matter of it, for it is no compound being; not the personality of it, as I appeal to common sense: and if a man could believe that his personal soul hath been

actually created those intelligent substances that have such nobility and excellency of being above* brute senseless matter, 'tis pervicaciousness to deny that he created matter also: unless they'll say, necessary existence is included† in the very essence and idea of matter.

But‡ matter doth not include in its nature a necessity of existence. For human§ souls, as is proved before, have been actually created, and consequently have not necessary existence included in their essence. Now can any man‖ believe, that his¶ spiritual soul, that understands, and judges, and invents, endowed with those divine faculties of sense, memory, and reason, hath a dependent and precarious being created and preserved by another; while** the particles of this dead ink and paper have†† been necessarily eternal and uncreated?‡‡ 'Tis against natural reason; and no one, while he contemplates an individual body, can discern that necessity of its existence.§§ But men have been taught to believe that extension or space, and body, are both the‖‖ selfsame thing. So that because they cannot imagine, how space can either begin or cease to exist, they presently conclude, that extended infinite matter must needs be eternal.¶¶ But I shall fully prove hereafter,[z] that body and space or dis-

from everlasting, such an opinion would be as destructive to atheism, as to concede the contrary now. So that the spiritual souls of men have confessedly been produced out of nothing."—D.]

[* excellency of being above; 1*st ed.* "excellency above."—D.]

[† unless they'll say, necessary existence is included; 1*st ed.* "unless necessary existence be included."—D.]

[‡ But; 1*st ed.* "Thirdly."—D.]

[§ For human; 1*st ed.* "Human."—D.]

[‖ any man; 1*st ed.* "I."—D.] [¶ his; 1*st ed.* "my."—D.]

[** and invents; endowed with those divine faculties of sense, memory, and reason; hath a dependent and precarious being created and preserved by another; while; 1*st ed.* "and invents, &c.; hath notwithstanding a dependent and precarious being; while."—D.]

[†† have; *so other eds.; ed.* 1735. "hath."—D.]

[‡‡ uncreated; 1*st ed.* "uncreate."—D.]

[§§ that necessity of its existence. But; 1*st ed.* "such a necessity. But."—D.]

[‖‖ are both the; 1*st ed.* "are the."—D.]

[¶¶ be eternal; 1*st ed.* "eternally have a being."—D.] [z] Serm. vii.

tance are quite different things, and that a vacuity is interspersed among the particles of matter, and such a one as hath a vastly larger extension than all the matter of the universe. Which now being supposed, they ought to* abstract their imagination from that false infinite extension, and conceive one particle of matter surrounded on all sides with vacuity, and contiguous to no other body. And whereas† formerly they fancied an immense boundless space, as an homogeneous one, which great individual they believed might deserve the attribute of necessary existence; let them now please to imagine one‡ solitary atom that hath no dependence on the rest of the world, and is no more sustained in being by other matter, than it could be created by it; and then I would ask the question,§ whether this poor atom, sluggish and unactive as it is, doth involve necessity of existence, the first and highest of all perfections, in its particular nature and notion? I dare presume for the negative in the judgments of all serious men. And I observe the Epicureans take much pains to convince us,[a] that in natural corruptions and dissolutions, atoms are not reduced to nothing; which surely would be needless, if the very idea of atoms imported self-existence. And yet if one atom do not include so much in its notion and essence, all atoms put together, that is, all the matter of the universe, cannot‖ include it. So that, upon the whole matter, since¶ creation is no contradiction; since** God hath certainly created nobler substances than matter; and since†† matter is not necessarily eternal; it is most reasonable to believe, that

[* ought to; 1*st ed.* "must."—D.]

[† body. And whereas; 1*st ed.* "body. So that all other matter is divided and distinct from it by the very supposition. And hence it appears, that whereas."—D.]

[‡ let them now please to imagine one; 1*st ed.* "now the whole question is about one."—D.]

[§ and then I would ask the question; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[a] Lucret. lib. i.

[‖ cannot; 1*st ed.* "does not."—D.]

[¶ since; 1*st ed.* "seeing that."—D.]

[** since; 1*st ed.* "that."—D.]

[†† since; 1*st ed.* "that."—D.]

the eternal and self-existent God created the material world,* and produced it out of nothing.†

And then, as to the last proposition, that motion, as an attribute or property of matter, cannot have been from eternity. That we may wave‡ some metaphysical arguments, which demonstrate that local motion cannot be positively eternal; we shall only observe, in two words, that if matter be not essentially eternal, as we have shewed before, much less can motion be, that is but the adjunct and accident of it. Nay, though we should concede an eternity to matter; yet why must motion be coeval with it? which is not only not inherent and essential to matter, but may be produced and destroyed at the pleasure of free agents; both which are flatly repugnant to an eternal and necessary duration. I am aware how some have asserted, that the same quantity of motion is always kept up in the world; which may seem to favour the opinion of its infinite duration: but that assertion§ doth solely depend upon an absolute *plenum;* which being refuted in my next discourse,‖ it will then appear how absurd and false that conceit is, about the same quantity of motion; how easily disproved from that power in human souls to excite motion when they please, and from the gradual¶

[* world; 1*st ed.* "world also."—D.]

[† nothing; *after this word the* 1*st ed. has the following paragraph:*

"And fourthly, it will be allowed as true by all those that can reach these speculations, That whatsoever hath not necessarily an eternal self-existence included in its very nature and definition (which we have proved matter hath not), cannot have been *actually* self-existent from eternity: so that finally there is not only a great inducement from its probability and reasonableness, but a downright necessity of admitting the creation of the world."—D.]

[‡ And then, as to the last proposition, that motion, as an attribute or property of matter, cannot have been from eternity. That we may wave; 1*st ed.* "And then fifthly, as to motion, that we may wave."—D.]

[§ assertion; 1*st ed.* "fancy."—D.]

[‖ next discourse; 1*st ed.* "next."—D.]

[¶ that conceit is, about the same quantity of motion; how easily disproved from that power in human souls to excite motion when they please, and from the gradual; 1*st ed.* "that conceit is, how easily disproved from the motive power of souls embodied, and the gradual."—D.]

increase of men and other animals, and many arguments besides. Therefore let this also be concluded, that motion has not been eternal* in an infinite past duration: which was the last thing† to be proved.

[* has not been eternal; 1*st ed.* "cannot have subsisted."—D.]
[† the last thing; 1*st ed.* "the thing."—D.]

A

CONFUTATION OF ATHEISM

FROM THE

ORIGIN AND FRAME OF THE WORLD.

PART II.

SERMON VII.

Preached November the 7th, 1692.

ACTS, xiv. 15, &c.

That ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

WHEN we first entered upon this topic, the demonstration of God's existence from the origin and frame of the world, we offered to prove four propositions.

I. That this present system of heaven and earth cannot possibly have subsisted from all eternity.

II. That matter considered generally, and abstractly from any particular form and concretion, cannot possibly have been eternal; or, if matter could be so, yet motion cannot have coexisted with it eternally, as an inherent property and essential attribute of matter. These two we have already established in the preceding discourse; we shall now shew, in the third place,

III. That, though we should allow the Atheists, that

matter and motion may have been from everlasting; yet if (as they now suppose) there were once no sun, nor stars, nor earth, nor planets, but the particles that now constitute them were diffused in the mundane space in manner of a chaos, without any concretion or* coalition; those dispersed particles could never of themselves, by any kind of natural motion, whether called fortuitous or mechanical, have convened into this present or any other like frame of heaven and earth.

1. And first, as to that ordinary cant of illiterate and puny Atheists, the *fortuitous or casual concourse of atoms*, that compendious and easy despatch of the most important and difficult affair, the formation of a world (besides that in our next undertaking it will be refuted all along); I shall now briefly despatch it, from what hath been formerly said concerning the true notions of fortune and chance.[b] Whereby it is evident, that in the atheistical hypothesis of the world's production, fortuitous and mechanical must be the self-same thing. Because *fortune* is no real entity nor physical essence, but a mere relative signification, denoting only this; that such a thing said to fall out by fortune was really effected by material and necessary causes, but the person, with regard to whom it is called fortuitous, was ignorant of those causes or their tendencies, and did not design or† foresee such an effect. This is the only allowable and genuine notion of the word fortune. But thus to affirm, that the world was made *fortuitously*, is as much as to say, that before the world was made, there was some intelligent agent or spectator, who, designing to do something else, or expecting that something else would be done with the materials of the world, there were some occult and unknown motions and tendencies in matter, which mechanically formed the world beside his design or expectation. Now the Atheists, we may presume, will be loath to assert a fortuitous formation in this proper sense and meaning, whereby they will make

[* or; 1*st ed.* "and."—D.]
[† or; 1*st ed.* "nor."—D.]

[b] Serm. v.

understanding to be older than heaven and earth. Or if they should so assert it, yet, unless they will affirm that the intelligent agent did dispose and direct the inanimate matter (which is what we would bring them to), they must still leave their atoms to their mechanical affections; not able to make one step toward the production of a world beyond the necessary laws of motion. It is plain, then, that *fortune*, as to the matter before us, is but a synonymous word with nature and necessity. It remains that we examine the adequate meaning of *chance*;[c] which properly signifies, that all events called casual, among inanimate bodies, are mechanically and naturally produced according to the determinate figures, and textures, and motions of those bodies; with this negation only, that those inanimate bodies are not conscious of their own operations, nor contrive and cast about how to bring such events to pass. So that thus to say, that the world was made *casually* by the concourse of atoms, is no more than to affirm, that the atoms composed the world mechanically and fatally; only they were not sensible of it, nor studied and considered about so noble an undertaking. For if atoms formed the world according to the essential properties of bulk, figure, and motion, they formed it *mechanically;* and if they formed it mechanically without perception and design, they formed it *casually*. So that this negation of consciousness being all that the notion of chance can add to that of mechanism, we, that do not dispute this matter with the Atheists, nor believe that atoms ever acted by counsel and thought, may have leave to consider the several names of *fortune*, and *chance*, and *nature*, and *mechanism*, as one and the same hypothesis. Wherefore, once for all to overthrow all possible explications which Atheists have or may assign for the formation of the world, we will undertake to evince this following proposition:

2. That the atoms or particles which now constitute heaven and earth, being once separate and diffused in the mundane space, like the supposed *chaos*, could never, *without*

[c] Serm. v.

a God, by their mechanical affections, have convened into this present frame of things, or any other like it.

Which that we may perform with the greater clearness and conviction, it will be necessary, in a discourse about the formation of the world, to give you a brief account of some of the most principal and systematical *phenomena* that occur in the world now that it is formed.

(1.) The most considerable *phenomenon* belonging to terrestrial bodies is the general action of *gravitation*, whereby all known bodies in the vicinity of the earth do tend and press towards its centre; not only such as are sensibly and evidently heavy, but even those that are comparatively the lightest, and even in their proper place and natural elements (as they usually speak); as air gravitates even in air, and water in water. This hath been demonstrated and experimentally proved beyond contradiction, by several ingenious persons of the present age; but by none so perspicuously, and copiously, and accurately, as by the honourable founder of this Lecture,[d] in his incomparable Treatises of the Air and Hydrostatics.

(2.) Now this is the constant property of *gravitation*, that the weight of all bodies around the earth is ever proportional to the quantity of their matter: as, for instance, a pound weight (examined hydrostatically) of all kinds of bodies, though of the most different forms and textures, doth always contain an equal quantity of solid mass or corporeal substance. This is the ancient doctrine of the Epicurean physiology,[e] then and since very probably indeed, but yet precariously asserted: but it is lately demonstrated and put beyond controversy by that very excellent and divine theorist, Mr. Isaac Newton,[f] to whose most admirable sagacity and industry we shall frequently be obliged in this and the following discourse.

I will not entertain this auditory with an account of the

[d] Mr. Boyle's Physicom. Exp. of Air, Hydrostat. Paradoxes.

[e] Lucret. lib. i.

[f] Newton. Philos. Natur. Princ. Math. lib. iii. prop. 6.

demonstration; but referring the curious to the book itself for full satisfaction, I shall now proceed and build upon it as a truth solidly established, *that all bodies weigh according to their matter;* provided only that the compared bodies be at equal distances from the centre toward which they weigh. Because the further they are removed from the centre, the lighter they are; decreasing gradually and uniformly in weight, in a duplicate proportion to the increase of the distance.

(3.) Now since gravity is found proportional to the quantity of matter, there is a manifest necessity of admitting a *vacuum*, another principal doctrine of the *atomical* philosophy. Because if there were every where an absolute plenitude and density, without any empty pores and interstices between the particles of bodies, then all bodies of equal dimensions would contain an equal quantity of matter, and consequently, as we have shewed before, would be equally ponderous; so that gold, copper, stone, wood, &c., would have all the same specific weight, which experience assures us they have not: neither would any of them descend in the air, as we all see they do; because, if all space was full, even the air would be as dense and specifically as heavy as they. If it be said, that, though the difference of specific gravity may proceed from variety of texture, the lighter bodies being of a more loose and porous composition, and the heavier more dense and compact; yet an ethereal subtile matter, which is in a perpetual motion, may penetrate and pervade the minutest and inmost cavities of the closest bodies, and adapting itself to the figure of every pore, may adequately fill them, and so prevent all vacuity, without increasing the weight: to this we answer, that that subtile matter itself must be of the same substance and nature with all other matter, and therefore it also must weigh proportionally to its bulk; and as much of it as at any time is comprehended within the pores of a particular body must gravitate jointly with that body; so that if the presence of this ethereal matter made an absolute fulness, all bodies of

equal dimensions would be equally heavy: which being refuted by experience, it necessarily follows, that there is a vacuity; and that (notwithstanding some little objections, full of cavil and sophistry) mere and simple extension or space hath a quite different nature and notion from real body and impenetrable substance.

(4.) This, therefore, being established; in the next place, it's of great consequence to our present inquiry, if we can make a computation, how great is the whole sum of the void spaces in our system, and what proportion it bears to the corporeal substance. By many and accurate trials[g] it manifestly appears, that refined gold, the most ponderous of known bodies (though even that must be allowed to be porous too, because it's* dissoluble in mercury, and aqua regis, and other chymical liquors, and because it's† naturally a thing impossible that the figures and sizes of its constituent particles should be so justly adapted as to touch one another in every point), I say, gold is in specific weight to common water as 19 to 1; and water to common air as 850 to 1: so that gold is to air as 16,150 to 1. Whence it clearly appears, seeing matter and gravity are always commensurate, that (though we should allow the texture of gold to be entirely close, without any vacuity) the ordinary air in which we live and respire is of so thin a composition, that 16,149 parts of its dimensions are mere emptiness and nothing, and the remaining one only material and real substance. But if gold itself be admitted, as it must be, for a porous concrete, the proportion of void to body in the texture of common air will be so much the greater. And thus it is in the lowest and densest region of the air near the surface of the earth, where the whole mass of air is in a state of violent compression, the inferior being pressed and constipated by the weight of all the incumbent. But, since the air is now certainly known to consist of elastic or springy

[g] Mr. Boyle, of Air and Porosity of Bodies.

[* because it's; 1*st ed.* "being."—D.]

[† because it's; 1*st ed.* "being."—D.]

particles,[h] that have a continual tendency and endeavour to expand and display themselves; and the dimensions, to which they expand themselves, to be reciprocally as the compression; it follows, that the higher you ascend in it, where it is less and less compressed by the superior air, the more and more it is rarefied. So that at the height of a few miles from the surface of the earth, it is computed to have some million parts of empty space in its texture for one of solid matter. And at the height of one terrestrial semi-diameter (not above four thousand miles), the ether is of that wonderful tenuity, that, by an exact calculation,[i] if a small sphere of common air of one inch diameter (already 16,149 parts nothing) should be further expanded to the thinness of that ether, it would more than take up the vast orb of Saturn, which is many million million times bigger than the whole globe of the earth. And yet, the higher you ascend above that region, the rarefaction still gradually increases without stop or limit: so that, in a word, the whole concave of the firmament, except the sun and planets and their atmospheres, may be considered as a mere void. Let us allow, then, that all the matter of the system of our sun may be 50,000 times as much as the whole mass of the earth; and we appeal to astronomy, if we are not liberal enough and even prodigal in this concession. And let us suppose further, that the whole globe of the earth is entirely solid and compact, without any void interstices; notwithstanding what hath been shewed before, as to the texture of gold itself. Now, though we have made such ample allowances, we shall find, notwithstanding, that the void space of our system is immensely bigger than all its corporeal mass. For, to proceed upon our supposition, that all the matter within the firmament is 50,000 times bigger than the solid globe of the earth; if we assume the diameter of the *orbis magnus* (wherein the earth moves about the sun) to be only 7,000 times as big as the diameter of the earth, (though the

[h] Mr. Boyle, ibid.

[i] Newton. Philos. Nat. Principia Math. p. 503.

latest and most accurate observations make it thrice 7,000), and the diameter of the firmament to be only 100,000 times as long as the diameter of the *orbis magnus* (though it cannot possibly be less than that, but may be vastly and unspeakably bigger), we must pronounce, after such large concessions on that side, and such great abatements on ours, that the sum of empty spaces within the concave of the firmament is 6,860 million million million times bigger than all the matter contained in it.

Now, from hence we are enabled to form a right conception and imagination of the supposed *chaos*, and then we may proceed to determine the controversy with more certainty and satisfaction, whether a world like the present could possibly without a divine influence be formed in it, or no?

1. And first, because every fixed star is supposed by astronomers to be of the same nature with our sun, and each may very possibly have planets about them, though, by reason of their vast distance, they be invisible to us; we will assume this reasonable supposition, that the same proportion of void space to matter, which is found in our sun's region within the sphere of the fixed stars, may competently well hold in the whole mundane space. I am aware that in this computation we must not assign the whole capacity of that sphere for the region of our sun, but allow half of its diameter for the *radii* of the several regions of the next fixed stars; so that, diminishing our former number, as this last consideration requires, we may safely affirm, from certain and demonstrated principles, that the empty space of our solar region (comprehending half of the diameter of the firmament) is 8,575 hundred thousand million million times more ample than all the corporeal substance in it. And we may fairly suppose, that the same proportion may hold through the whole extent of the universe.

2. And secondly, as to the state or condition of matter before the world was a-making, which is compendiously expressed by the word *chaos*; they must either suppose, that

the matter of our solar system* was *evenly*, or well-nigh evenly, diffused through the region of the sun, which† would represent a particular chaos; or that all matter universally was so spread‡ through the whole mundane space, which would truly exhibit a general chaos; no part of the universe being rarer or denser than another. And this is agreeable to the ancient description of chaos,§ that *the heavens and earth had μίαν ἰδέαν, μίαν μορφὴν, one form*, one texture and constitution;¶ which could not be, unless all the mundane matter were *uniformly* and evenly diffused. 'Tis indifferent to our dispute, whether they suppose it to have continued a long time or very little in the state of diffusion. For, if there were‖ but one single moment in all past eternity, when matter was so diffused, we shall plainly and fully prove, that it could never have convened afterwards into the present frame and order of things.

3. It is evident from what we have newly proved, that in the supposition of such a chaos, or such an even diffusion either of the whole mundane matter, or that of our system (for it matters not which they assume), every single particle would have a sphere of void space around it 8,575 hundred thousand million million times bigger than the dimensions of that particle. Nay, further, though the proportion already appear so immense, yet every single particle would really be surrounded with a void sphere eight times as capacious as that newly mentioned, its diameter being compounded of the diameter of the proper sphere, and the semi-diameters of the contiguous spheres of the neighbouring particles.

[* they must either suppose, that the matter of our solar system; 1*st ed.* "they must suppose, that either all the matter of our system."—D.]

[† which; 1*st ed.* "this."—D.]

[‡ or that all matter universally was so spread; 1*st ed.* "or all matter universally so spread."—D.]

[§ And this is agreeable to the ancient description of chaos; 1*st ed.* "Which is agreeable to the ancient description of it."—D.]

¶ Diod. Sicul. lib. i. [t. i. p. 10. ed. Wessel.—D.] Κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς τῶν ὅλων σύστασιν μίαν ἔχειν ἰδέαν οὐρανόν τε καὶ γῆν, μεμιγμένης αὐτῶν τῆς φύσεως. Apoll. Rhodius, lib. i. [496.—D.] Ἤειδεν δ' ὅς γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἠδὲ θάλασσα, Τὸ πρὶν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι μιῇ συναρηρότα μορφῇ.

[‖ were; 1*st ed.* "was."—D.]

From whence it appears, that every particle (supposing them globular, or not very oblong) would be above nine million times their own length from any other particle. And moreover, in the whole surface of this void sphere there can only twelve particles be *evenly* placed, as the hypothesis requires; that is, at equal distances from the central one and from each* other: so that if the matter of our system, or of the universe, was equally dispersed, like the supposed chaos, the result and issue would be, not only that every atom would be many million times its own length distant from any other; but, if any one should be moved mechanically (without direction or attraction) to the limit of that distance, 'tis above a hundred million millions odds to an unit that it would not strike upon any other atom, but glide through an empty interval without any contact.

4. 'Tis true, that while I calculate these measures, I suppose all the particles of matter to be at absolute rest among themselves, and situated in an exact and mathematical evenness; neither of which is likely to be allowed by our adversaries, who, not admitting the former, but asserting the eternity of motion, will consequently deny the latter also; because, in the very moment that motion is admitted in the chaos, such an exact evenness cannot possibly be preserved. But this I do, not to draw any argument against them from the universal rest or accurately equal diffusion of matter, but only that I may better demonstrate the great rarity and tenuity of their imaginary chaos, and reduce it to computation; which computation will hold with exactness enough, though we allow the particles of the chaos to be variously moved, and to differ something in size, and figure, and situation. For if some particles should approach nearer each other than in the former proportion, with respect to some other particles they would be as much remoter. So that, notwithstanding a small diversity of their positions and distances, the whole aggregate of matter, as long as it retained the name and nature of chaos, would retain well-

[* and from each; *1st ed.* "and each."—D.]

nigh an uniform tenuity of texture, and may be considered as an homogeneous fluid; as several portions of the same sort of water are reckoned to be of the same specific gravity, though it be naturally impossible that every particle and pore of it, considered geometrically, should have equal sizes and dimensions.

We have now represented the true scheme and condition of the chaos, how all the particles would be disunited, and what vast intervals of empty space would lie between each. To form a system, therefore, 'tis necessary that these squandered atoms should convene and unite into great and compact masses, like the bodies of the earth and planets. Without such a coalition, the diffused chaos must have continued and reigned to all eternity. But how could particles so widely dispersed combine into that closeness of texture? Our adversaries can have only these two ways of accounting for it.

*First,** By the common motion of matter, proceeding from external impulse and conflict (without attraction), by which every body moves uniformly in a direct line, according to the determination of the impelling force. For, they may say, the atoms of the chaos being variously moved, according to this catholic law, must needs knock and interfere; by which means some that have convenient figures for mutual coherence might chance to stick together, and others might join to those, and so by degrees such huge masses might be formed, as afterwards became suns and planets: or there might arise some vertiginous motions† or whirlpools in the matter of the chaos, whereby the atoms might be thrust and crowded to the middle of those whirlpools, and there constipate one another into great solid globes, such as now appear in the world.

Or, *secondly,* by mutual gravitation or attraction. For they may assert, that matter hath inherently and essentially

[* *First*; 1*st ed.* "*Either*."—D.]

[† motions; *so other eds.*: *ed.* 1735. "motion."—D.]

such an internal* energy, whereby it incessantly tends to unite itself to all other matter; so that several particles, placed in a void space, at any distance whatsoever, would, without any external impulse, spontaneously convene and unite together. And thus the atoms of the chaos, though never so widely diffused, might, by this innate property of attraction, soon assemble themselves into great spherical masses, and constitute systems like the present heaven and earth.

This is all that can be proposed by Atheists, as an efficient cause of the† world. For, as to the Epicurean theory, of atoms descending down an infinite space by an inherent principle of gravitation, which tends not toward other matter, but toward a *vacuum* or nothing, and verging from the perpendicular, *no body knows why, nor when, nor where*;[k] 'tis such miserable absurd stuff, so repugnant to itself, and so contrary to the known phenomena of nature, though‡ it contented supine unthinking Atheists for a thousand years together, that we will not now honour it with a special refutation. But what it hath common with the other explications, we will fully confute, together with them, in these three propositions.

(1.) That by common motion (without attraction) the dissevered particles of the chaos could never make the world, could never convene into such great compact masses as the planets now are, nor either acquire or continue such motions as the planets now have.

(2.) That such a mutual gravitation or spontaneous attraction can neither be inherent and essential to matter, nor ever supervene to it, unless impressed and infused into it by a divine power.

(3.) That though we should allow such attraction to be natural and essential to all matter, yet the atoms of a chaos could never so convene by it as to form the present system;

[* internal; 1*st ed.* "intrinsick."—D.] [† the; 1*st ed.* "a."—D.]

[k] Lucret. [ii. 293.—D.] Nec regione loci certa, nec tempore certo.

[‡ though; 1*st ed.* "yet."—D.]

or, if they could form it, it could neither acquire such motions, nor continue permanent in this state, without the power and providence of a divine being.

(1.) And first, that by common motion the matter of chaos could never convene into such masses as the planets now are. Any man that considers the spacious void intervals of the chaos, how immense they are in proportion to the bulk of the atoms, will hardly induce himself to believe, that particles so widely disseminated could ever throng and crowd one another into a close and compact texture. He will rather conclude, that those few that should happen to clash might rebound after the collision; or, if they cohered, yet by the next conflict with other atoms might be separated again; and so on in an eternal vicissitude of fast and loose, without ever consociating into the huge condense bodies of planets, some of whose particles upon this supposition must have travelled many millions of leagues through the gloomy regions of chaos, to place themselves where they now are. But then, how rarely would there be any clashing at all; how very rarely, in comparison to the number of atoms! The whole multitude of them, generally speaking, might freely move and rove for ever with very little occurring or interfering. Let us conceive two of the nearest particles according to our former calculation; or rather let us try the same proportions in another example, that will come easier to the imagination. Let us suppose two ships, fitted with durable timber and rigging, but without pilot or mariners, to be placed in the vast Atlantic or the Pacific Ocean, as far asunder as may be; how many thousand years might expire before those solitary vessels should happen to strike one against the other! But let us imagine the space yet more ample, even the whole face of the earth to be covered with sea, and the two ships to be placed in the opposite poles; might not they now move long enough without any danger of clashing? And yet I find, that the two nearest atoms in our evenly diffused chaos have ten thousand times less proportion to the two void circular planes around them, than our two ships would have to the whole surface of

the deluge. Let us assume, then, another deluge, ten thousand times larger than Noah's; is it not now utterly incredible that our two vessels, placed there, antipodes to each other, should ever happen to concur? And yet, let me add, that the ships would move in one and the same surface, and consequently must needs encounter, when they either advance towards one another in direct lines, or meet in the intersection of cross ones; but the atoms may not only fly sideways, but over, likewise, and under each other, which makes it many million times more improbable that they should interfere than the ships, even in the last and unlikeliest instance. But they may say, though the odds indeed be unspeakable that the atoms do not convene in any set number of trials, yet, in an infinite succession of them, may not such a combination possibly happen? But let them consider, that the improbability of casual hits is never diminished by repetition of trials; they are as unlikely to fall out at the thousandth as at the first.[1] So that in a matter of mere chance, when there is so many millions odds against any assignable experiment, 'tis in vain to expect it should ever succeed, even in endless duration.

But though we should concede it to be simply possible, that the matter of chaos might convene into great masses, like planets, yet it's absolutely impossible that those masses should acquire such revolutions about the sun. Let us suppose any one of those masses to be the present earth. Now the annual revolution of the earth must proceed (in this hypothesis) *either* from the sum and result of the several motions of all the particles that formed the earth, *or* from a new impulse from some external matter, after it was formed. The *former* is apparently absurd, because the particles that formed the round earth must needs convene from all points and quarters towards the middle, and would generally tend toward its centre, which would make the whole compound to rest in a poise; or at least that overplus of motion which the particles of one hemisphere could have above the other would be very small and inconsiderable; too feeble and languid to

[1] Serm. v.

propel so vast and ponderous a body with that prodigious velocity. And, *secondly*, 'tis impossible that any external matter should impel that compound mass after it was formed. 'Tis manifest that nothing else could impel it, unless the ethereal matter be supposed to be carried about the sun like a *vortex* or whirlpool, as a vehicle to convey it and the rest of the planets. But this is refuted from what we have shewn above, that those spaces of the ether may be reckoned a mere void, the whole quantity of their matter scarce amounting to the weight of a grain. 'Tis refuted also from matter of fact in the motion of comets, which, as often as they are visible to us,[m] are in the region of our planets, and there are observed to move, some in quite contrary courses to theirs, and some in cross and oblique ones, in planes inclined to the plane of the ecliptic in all kinds of angles; which firmly evinces that the regions of the ether are empty and free, and neither assist nor resist* the revolutions of planets. But, moreover, there could not possibly arise in the chaos any *vortices* or whirlpools at all, either to form the globes of the planets, or to revolve them when formed. 'Tis acknowledged by all, that inanimate, unactive matter moves always in a straight line, nor ever reflects in an angle, nor bends in a circle (which is a continual reflection), unless *either* by some external impulse that may divert it from the direct motion, *or* by an intrinsic principle of gravity or attraction that may make it describe a curve line about the attracting body. But this latter cause is not now supposed; and the former could never beget whirlpools in a chaos of so great a laxity and thinness. For 'tis matter of certain experience, and universally allowed, that all bodies moved circularly have a perpetual endeavour to recede from the centre, and every moment would fly out in right lines if they were not violently restrained and kept in by contiguous matter. But there is no such restraint in the supposed chaos,† no want of empty

[m] Newton, ibidem, p. 408.

[* assist nor resist; 1*st ed.* "resist nor assist."—D.]

[† in the supposed chaos; 1*st ed.* "in a chaos."—D.]

room there; no possibility of effecting one single revolution in way of a *vortex*, which necessarily requires (if attraction be not supposed)* either an absolute fulness of matter, or a pretty close constipation and mutual contact of its particles.

And, for the same reason, 'tis evident, that the planets could not continue their revolutions about the sun, though they could possibly acquire them. For, to drive and carry the planets in such orbs as they now describe, that ethereal matter must be compact and dense, as dense as the very planets themselves; otherwise they would certainly fly out in spiral lines to the very circumference of the *vortex*. But we have often inculcated, that the wide tracts of the ether may be reputed as a mere extended void. So that there is nothing (in this hypothesis) that can retain and bind the planets in their orbs for one single moment; but they would immediately desert them and the neighbourhood of the sun, and vanish away in tangents to their several circles into the abyss of mundane space.

(2.) Secondly, We affirm that mutual gravitation, or spontaneous attraction, cannot possibly be innate and essential to matter. By attraction, we do not here understand what is improperly,† though vulgarly, called so in the operations of drawing, sucking, pumping, &c. which is really pulsion and trusion, and belongs to that common motion which we have already shewn to be insufficient for the formation of a world: but we now mean (as we have explained it before) such a power and quality, whereby all parcels of matter would mutually attract or mutually tend and press to all others; so that, for instance, two distant atoms *in vacuo* would spontaneously convene together without the impulse of external bodies.

Now, *first*, we say,‡ if our Atheists suppose this power to be inherent and essential to matter, they overthrow their own hypothesis; there could never be a chaos at all upon these terms, but the present form of our system must have con-

[* (if attraction be not supposed); *not in 1st ed.*—D.]
[† improperly: *so other eds.: ed.* 1735, "properly."—D.]
[‡ Now, *first*, we say; *1st ed.* "Now we say."—D.]

tinued from all eternity, against their own supposition, and what we have proved in our last.[n] For, if they affirm that there might be a chaos notwithstanding innate gravity, then let them assign any period, though never so remote, when the diffused matter might convene. They must confess, that before that assigned period matter had existed eternally, inseparably endued with this principle of attraction, and yet had never attracted nor convened before in* that infinite duration, which is so monstrous an absurdity as even they will blush to be charged with. But some, perhaps, may imagine, that a former system might be dissolved and reduced to a chaos, from which the present system might have its original, as that former had from another, and so on; new systems having grown out of old ones in infinite vicissitudes from all past eternity. But we say, that in the supposition of innate gravity, no system at all could be dissolved; for how is it possible that the matter of solid masses, like earth, and planets, and stars, should fly up from their centres against its inherent principle of mutual attraction, and diffuse itself in a chaos? This is absurder than the other: that only supposed innate gravity not to be exerted; this makes it to be defeated, and to act contrary to its own nature. So that, upon all accounts, this essential power of gravitation or attraction is irreconcilable with the Atheist's own doctrine of a chaos.

And, *secondly*, 'tis repugnant to common sense and reason. 'Tis utterly inconceivable, that inanimate brute matter, without the mediation of some immaterial being, should operate upon and affect other matter without mutual contact; that distant bodies should act upon each other through a *vacuum*, without the intervention of something else, by and through which the action may be conveyed from one to the other. We will not obscure and perplex with multitude of words what is so clear and evident by its own light, and must needs be allowed by all that have† competent use of thinking,

[n] Vide Serm. vi. and Serm. viii.

[* in; 1*st ed.* "during."—D.]

[† have; 1*st ed.* "have any."—D.]

and are initiated into, I do not say the mysteries, but the plainest principles of philosophy. Now, mutual gravitation or attraction, in our present acception of the words, is the same thing with this; 'tis an operation, or virtue, or influence of distant bodies upon each other through an empty interval, without any *effluvia*, or exhalations, or other corporeal medium to convey and transmit it. This power, therefore, cannot be innate and essential to matter: and if it be not essential, it is consequently most manifest, since* it doth not depend upon motion or rest, or figure or position of parts, which are all the ways that matter can diversify itself, that it could never supervene to it, unless impressed and infused into it by an immaterial and divine power.

We have proved that a power of mutual gravitation, without contact or impulse, can in nowise be attributed to mere matter; or, if it could, we shall presently shew that it would be wholly unable to form the world out of a *chaos*. What then if it be† made appear that there is really such a power of gravity, which cannot be ascribed to mere matter,‡ perpetually acting in the constitution of the present system? This would be a new and invincible argument for the being of God; being a direct and positive proof that an immaterial living mind doth inform and actuate the dead matter, and support the frame of the world. I will lay before you some certain *phenomena* of nature, and leave it to your consideration from what principle they can proceed. 'Tis demonstrated that the sun, moon, and all the planets, do reciprocally gravitate one toward another; that the gravitating power of each of them§ is exactly proportional to their matter, and arises from the several gravitations or attractions of all the individual particles‖ that compose the whole mass; that all

[* since; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.]

[† of a *chaos*. What then if it be; 1*st ed.* "of chaos. But, by the way, what if it be."—D.]

[‡ which cannot be ascribed to mere matter; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[§ them; 1*st ed.* "these."—D.]

[‖ all the individual particles; 1*st ed.* "every individual particle."—D.]

matter near the surface of the earth (and so in all the planets)* doth not only gravitate downwards, but upwards also, and sideways, and toward all imaginable points, though the tendency downward be predominant and alone discernible, because of the greatness and nearness of the attracting body, the earth; that every particle of the whole system doth attract and is attracted by all the rest, all operating upon all; that this *universal attraction or gravitation* is an incessant, regular, and uniform action, by certain and established laws, according to quantity of matter and longitude of distance; that it cannot be destroyed, nor impaired, nor augmented by any thing, neither by motion or rest, nor situation, nor posture, nor alteration of form, nor diversity of medium; that it is not a magnetical power, nor the effect of a vortical motion, those common attempts towards the explication of gravity: these things, I say, are fully demonstrated as matters of fact, by that very ingenious author whom we cited before.° Now how is it possible that these things should be effected by any material and mechanical agent? We have evinced, that mere matter cannot operate upon matter without mutual contact. It remains, then, that these phenomena are produced *either* by the intervention of air or ether, or other such medium, that communicates the impulse from one body to another, *or* by effluvia and spirits, that are emitted from the one, and pervene to the other. We can conceive no other way of performing them mechanically. But what impulse or agitation can be propagated through the ether, from one particle entombed and wedged in the very centre of the earth, to another in the centre of Saturn? Yet even those two particles do reciprocally affect each other with the same force and vigour, as they would do at the same distance in any other situation imaginable. And because the impulse from this particle is not directed to that only, but to all the rest in the universe, to all quarters and regions, at

[* earth (and so in all the planets) doth; *1st ed.* "earth, for example, doth."—D.]

° Newton. Philosoph. Natural. Princip. Math. lib. iii.

once invariably and incessantly; to do this mechanically, the same physical point of matter must move all manner of ways equally and constantly in the same instant and moment, which is flatly impossible. But, if this particle cannot propagate such motion,* much less can it send out effluvia to all points without intermission or variation; such multitudes of effluvia as to lay hold on every atom in the universe without missing of one. Nay, every single particle of the very effluvia (since† they also attract and gravitate) must in this supposition emit other secondary effluvia all the world over; and those others still emit more, and so *in infinitum*. Now, if these things be repugnant to human reason, we have great reason to affirm, that universal gravitation, a thing certainly existent in nature, is above all mechanism and material causes, and proceeds from a higher principle, a divine energy and impression.

(3.) Thirdly, we affirm, that though we should allow that reciprocal attraction is essential to matter, yet the atoms of a chaos could never so convene by it as to form the present system; or, if they could form it, yet it could neither acquire these revolutions, nor subsist in the present condition, without the conservation and providence of a divine Being.

1. For, first, if the matter of the universe, and consequently the space through which it's diffused, be supposed to be *finite*, (and I think it might be demonstrated to be so, but that we have already exceeded the just measures of a sermon,) then, since every single particle hath an innate gravitation toward all others, proportionated by matter and distance; it evidently appears, that the outward atoms of the chaos would necessarily tend inwards, and descend from all quarters toward the middle of the whole space. For, in respect to every atom, there would lie through the middle the greatest quantity of matter and the most vigorous attraction; and those atoms would there‡ form and constitute one huge spherical mass, which would be the only body in the universe. It is plain,

[* propagate such motion; 1*st ed.* "propagate motion."—D.]
[† since; 1*st ed.* "seeing."—D.]
[‡ and those atoms would there; 1*st ed.* "and would there."—D.]

therefore, that upon this supposition the matter of the chaos could never compose such divided and different masses as the stars and planets of the present world.

But, allowing our adversaries that the planets might be composed; yet, however, they could not possibly acquire such revolutions in circular orbs, or (which is all one to our present purpose) in ellipses very little eccentric. For, let them assign any place where the planets were formed. Was it nearer to the sun than the present distances are? But that is notoriously absurd; for then they must have ascended from the place of their formation, against the essential property of mutual attraction. Or, were each formed in the same orbs in which they now move? But then they must have moved from the point of rest, in an horizontal line, without any inclination or descent. Now there is no natural cause, neither innate gravity nor impulse of external matter, that could beget such a motion, for gravity alone must have carried them downwards to the vicinity of the sun. And, that the ambient ether is too liquid and empty to impel them horizontally with that prodigious celerity, we have sufficiently proved before. Or, were they made in some higher regions of the heavens, and from thence descended by their essential gravity till they all arrived at their respective orbs, each with its present degree of velocity, acquired by the fall? But then, why did they not continue their descent till they were contiguous to the sun, whither both mutual attraction and impetus carried them? What natural agent could turn them aside, could impel them so strongly with a transverse side-blow against that tremendous weight and rapidity when whole planets were a falling? But if* we should suppose, that by some cross attraction or other they might acquire an obliquity of descent, so as to miss the body of the sun, and to fall on one side of it? Then, indeed, the force of their fall would carry them quite beyond it; and so they might fetch a compass about it, and then return and ascend by the same steps and degrees of

[* planets were a falling? But if; 1*st ed.* "worlds are a falling? But though."—D.]

motion and velocity with which they descended before. Such an eccentric motion as this, much after the manner that comets revolve about the sun, they might possibly acquire by their innate principle of gravity; but circular revolutions, in concentric orbs about the sun or other central body, could in nowise be attained without the power of the divine arm. For the case of the planetary motions is this. Let us conceive all the planets to be formed or constituted with their centres in their several orbs, and at once to be impressed on them this gravitating energy toward all other matter, and a transverse impulse of a just quantity in each, projecting them directly in tangents to those orbs. The compound motion, which arises from this gravitation and projection together, describes the present revolutions of the primary planets about the sun, and of the secondary about those; the gravity prohibiting, that they cannot recede from the centres of their motions; and the transverse impulse withholding, that they cannot approach to them. Now although gravity could be innate, (which we have proved that it cannot be,) yet certainly this projected, this transverse and violent motion can only be ascribed to the right hand of the *most high God, creator of heaven and earth.*

But, finally, if we should grant them that* these circular revolutions could be naturally attained, or, if they will, that this very individual world, in its present posture and motion, was actually formed out of chaos by mechanical causes, yet it requires a divine power and providence to have preserved† it so long in the present state and condition. For what are the causes that preserve the system of our sun and his planets, so that the planets continue to move in the same orbs, neither receding from the sun, nor approaching nearer to him?‡ We have shewn that a§ transverse impulse

[* if we should grant them that; 1*st ed.* "though we grant that."—D.]

[† preserved; 1*st ed.* "conserved."—D.]

[‡ For what are the . . . . . nor approaching nearer to him; *not in 1st ed.*—D.]

[§ shewn that a; 1*st ed.* "shewed that there is a."—D.]

impressed upon the planets retains* them in their several orbs, that they are not drawn down toward the sun.† And again, their gravitating powers so incline them towards the sun, that they are not carried upwards beyond their due distance from him. These two great agents, a transverse impulse and gravity, are the secondary causes, under God, that maintain the system of sun and planets.‡ Gravity we understand to be a constant energy or faculty, perpetually§ acting by certain measures and naturally inviolable laws: we‖ say, a *faculty* and power, for we cannot conceive that the *act* of gravitation of this present moment can propagate itself, or produce that of the next. But the transverse impulse we conceive to have been one single act. For, by reason¶ of the inactivity of matter, and its inability to change its present state either of moving or resting, that transverse motion would,** from one single impulse, continue for ever equal and uniform, unless changed by the resistance of occurring†† bodies, or by a gravitating power. So that the planets, since they move horizontally (whereby gravity doth not alter‡‡ their swiftness), and through the liquid and unresisting spaces of the heavens, (where either no bodies at all, or inconsiderable ones, do occur,) may preserve the same velocity which the first impulse impressed upon them, not only for five or six thousand years, but many millions of millions. It appears, then, that if there was but one vast sun in the universe, and

[* retains; 1*st ed.* "which retains."—D.]

[† are not drawn down toward the sun; 1*st ed.* "be not drawn down by their gravitating powers toward the sun or other central bodies."—D.]

[‡ And again, their gravitating powers . . . . that maintain the system of sun and planets; *not in* 1*st ed.*—D.]

[§ faculty, perpetually; 1*st ed.* "faculty (which God hath infused into matter) perpetually."—D.]

[‖ we; 1*st ed.* "I."—D.]

[¶ But the transverse impulse we conceive to have been one single act. For, by reason; 1*st ed.* "But 'tis otherwise as to the transverse motion; which, by reason."—D.]

[** or resting, that transverse motion would; 1*st ed.* "or resting, would."—D.]

[†† occurring: *so other eds.: ed.* 1735, "recurring."—D.]

[‡‡ alter; 1*st ed.* "affect."—D.]

all the rest were planets revolving around him in concentric orbs at convenient distances, such a system as that would very long endure, could it but naturally have a principle of mutual attraction, and be once actually put into circular motions. But the frame of the present world hath a quite different structure: here's an innumerable multitude of fixed stars or suns, all which being made up of the same common matter, must be supposed to be equally endued with a power of gravitation. For if all have not such a power, what is it that could make that difference between bodies of the same sort? Nothing surely but a Deity could have so arbitrarily endued our sun and planets with a power of gravity not essential to matter; while all the fixed stars, that are so many suns, have nothing of that power. If the fixed stars, then, are supposed to have no power of gravitation, 'tis a plain proof of a divine Being. And 'tis as plain a proof of a divine Being, if they have the power of gravitation. For, since they are neither revolved about a common centre, nor have any transverse impulse, what is there else to restrain them from approaching toward each other, as their gravitating power incites them? What natural cause* can overcome nature itself? What is it that holds and keeps them in fixed stations and intervals against an incessant and inherent tendency to desert them? Nothing could hinder but that the outward stars, with their systems of planets, must necessarily have descended toward the middlemost system of the universe, whither all would be the most strongly attracted from all

[* all which being made up of the same common matter ..... as their gravitating power incites them? What natural cause; 1*st ed.* "all of which are demonstrated (and supposed, also, by our adversaries) to have mutual attraction: or, if they have not, even not to have it is an equal proof of a divine Being, that hath so arbitrarily endued matter with a power of gravity not essential to it, and hath confined its action to the matter of its own solar system: I say, all the fixed stars have a principle of mutual gravitation; and yet they are neither revolved about a common centre, nor have any transverse impulse nor any thing else to restrain them from approaching toward each other, as their gravitating powers incite them. Now what natural cause."—D.]

parts of a finite space. It is evident, therefore, that the present frame of sun and fixed stars could not possibly subsist without the providence of that almighty Deity, *who spake the word, and they were made; who commanded, and they were created; who hath made them fast for ever and ever, and hath given them a law, which shall not be broken.*[p]

2. And, secondly, in the supposition of an *infinite* chaos, 'tis hard indeed to determine what would follow in this imaginary case from an innate principle of gravity. But, to hasten to a conclusion, we will grant for the present, that the diffused matter might convene into an infinite number of great masses, at great distances from one another, like the stars and planets of this visible part of the world. But then it is impossible that the planets should naturally attain these circular revolutions, either by principle of gravitation, or by impulse* of ambient bodies. It is plain here is no difference as to this, whether the world be infinite or finite; so that the same arguments that we have used before may be equally urged in this supposition. And though we should concede that these revolutions might be acquired, and that all were settled and constituted in the present state and posture of things; yet, we say, the continuance of this frame and order for so long a duration as the known ages of the world, must necessarily infer the existence of God. For, though the universe was infinite, the now fixed† stars could not be fixed, but would naturally convene together, and confound system with system; because,‡ all mutually attracting, every one would move whither it was most powerfully drawn. This, they may say, is indubitable in the case of a finite world, where some systems must needs be outmost, and therefore be drawn toward the middle:

[p] Psal. cxlviii.

[* by principle of gravitation, or by impulse; 1*st ed.* "by intrinsic gravitation, or the impulse."—D.]

[† the now fixed; 1*st ed.* "the fixed."—D.]

[‡ because; 1*st ed.* "for."—D.]

but when infinite systems succeed one another through an infinite space, and none is either inward or outward, may not all the systems be situated in an accurate poise; and, because equally attracted on all sides, remain fixed and unmoved? But to this we reply, that unless the very mathematical centre of gravity of every system be placed and fixed in the very mathematical centre of the attractive power of all the rest, they cannot be evenly attracted on all sides, but must preponderate some way or other. Now he that considers what a mathematical centre is, and that quantity is infinitely divisible, will never be persuaded that such an universal equilibrium, arising from the coincidence of infinite centres, can naturally be acquired or maintained. If they say, that, upon the supposition of infinite matter, every system would be infinitely, and therefore equally, attracted on all sides, and consequently would rest in an exact equilibrium, be the centre of its gravity in what position soever; this will overthrow their very hypothesis. For, at this rate,* in an *infinite chaos* nothing at all could be formed; no particles could convene by mutual attraction; because† every one there must have infinite matter around it, and therefore must rest for ever, being evenly balanced between infinite attractions. Even the planets, upon this principle, must gravitate no more toward the sun than any other way; so that they would not revolve in curve lines, but fly away in direct tangents, till they struck against other planets or stars in some remote regions of the infinite space. An equal attraction on all sides of all matter is just equal to no attraction at all: and, by this means, all the motion in the universe must proceed from external impulse alone; which we have proved before to be an incompetent cause for the formation of a world.

And now, O thou almighty and eternal Creator, *having*

[* hypothesis. For, at this rate; 1*st ed.* "hypothesis; at this rate."—D.]
[† because; 1*st ed.* "for."—D.]

considered the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,[q] with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

[q] Psal. viii.

A

CONFUTATION OF ATHEISM

FROM THE

ORIGIN AND FRAME OF THE WORLD.

THE THIRD AND LAST PART.

SERMON VIII.

Preached December the 5th, 1692.

ACTS, xiv. 15, &c.

That ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

HAVING abundantly proved, in our last exercise, that the frame of the present world could neither be made nor preserved without the *power* of God, we shall now consider the structure and motions of our own system, if any characters of divine *wisdom* and *goodness* may be discoverable by us. And even at the first and general view it very evidently appears to us (which is our fourth and last proposition) that the order and beauty of the systematical parts of the world, the discernible ends and final causes of them, the τὸ βελτίον, or meliority above what was necessary to be, do evince, by a reflex argument, that it could not be produced by mechanism or chance, but by an intelligent and benign Agent, *that by his excellent wisdom made the heavens.*

But, before we engage in this disquisition, we must offer one necessary caution; that we need not nor do not confine and determine the purposes of God in creating all mundane bodies merely to human ends and uses. Not that we believe it laborious and painful to Omnipotence to create a world out of nothing, or more laborious to create a great world than a small one: so as we might think it disagreeable to the majesty and tranquillity of the divine nature to take so much pains for our sakes. Nor do we count it any absurdity, that such a vast and immense universe should be made for the sole use of such mean and unworthy creatures as the children of men. For, if we consider the dignity of an intelligent being, and put that in the scales against brute inanimate matter, we may affirm, without overvaluing human nature, that the soul of one virtuous and religious man is of greater worth and excellency than the sun and his planets, and all the stars in the world. If, therefore, it could appear, that all the mundane bodies are some way conducible to the service of man; if all were as beneficial to us as the polar stars were formerly for navigation; as the moon is for the flowing and ebbing of tides, by which an inestimable advantage accrues to the world; for her officious courtesy in long* winter nights, especially to the more northern nations, who, in a continual night, it may be, of a whole month, are so pretty well accommodated by the light of the moon reflected from frozen snow, that they do not much envy their antipodes a month's presence of the sun: if all the heavenly bodies were thus serviceable to us, we should not be backward to assign their usefulness to mankind as the sole end of their creation. But we dare not undertake to shew what advantage is brought to us by those innumerable stars in the galaxy and other parts of the firmament, not discernible by naked eyes, and yet each many thousand times bigger than the whole body of the earth. If you say they beget in us a great idea and veneration of the mighty Author and Governor of such stupendous bodies, and excite and elevate our minds to

[* in long; 1*st ed.* "on dark."—D.]

his adoration and praise, you say very truly and well. But would it not raise in us a higher apprehension of the infinite majesty and boundless beneficence of God, to suppose that those remote and vast bodies were formed, not merely upon our account, to be peeped at through an optic glass, but for different ends and nobler purposes? And yet who will deny but that there are great multitudes of lucid stars even beyond the reach of the best telescopes; and that every visible star may have opaque planets revolve about them, which we cannot discover? Now, if they were not created for our sakes, it is certain and evident that they were not made for their own. For matter hath no life nor perception, is not conscious of its own existence, nor capable of happiness, nor gives the sacrifice of praise and worship to the Author of its being. It remains, therefore, that all bodies were formed for the sake of intelligent minds: and as the earth was principally designed for the being and service and contemplation of men, why may not all other planets be created for the like uses, each for their own inhabitants which have life and understanding? If any man will indulge himself in this speculation, he need not quarrel with revealed religion upon such an account. The holy Scriptures do not forbid him to suppose as great a multitude of systems, and as much inhabited, as he pleases. 'Tis true, there is no mention in Moses's narrative of the creation, of any people in other planets; but it plainly appears, that the sacred historian doth only treat of the origins of terrestrial animals: he hath given us no account of God's creating the angels; and yet the same author, in the ensuing parts of the Pentateuch, makes not unfrequent mention of the *angels of God*. Neither need we be solicitous about the condition of those planetary people, nor raise frivolous disputes, how far they may participate in the miseries of Adam's fall, or in the benefits of Christ's incarnation. As if, because they are supposed to be *rational*, they must needs be concluded to be *men?* For what is man? not a *reasonable animal* merely, for that is not an adequate and distinguishing definition, but a rational mind of such particular faculties,

united to an organical body of such a certain structure and form, in such peculiar laws of connexion between the operations and affections of the mind and the motions of the body. Now, God Almighty, by the inexhausted fecundity of his creative power, may have made innumerable orders and classes of rational minds; some in their natural perfections higher than human souls, others inferior. But* a mind of superior or meaner capacites than human would constitute a different species, though united to a human body in the same laws of connexion; and a mind of human capacities would make another species, if united to a different body in different laws of connexion. For this sympathetical union of a rational soul with matter, so as to produce a vital communication between them, is an arbitrary institution of the divine wisdom: there is no reason nor foundation in the separate natures of either substance, why any motion in the body should produce any sensation at all in the soul; or why this motion should produce that particular sensation rather than any other. God, therefore, may have joined immaterial souls, even of the same class and capacities in their separate state, to other kind† of bodies, and in other laws of union; and from those different laws of union there will arise quite different affections, and natures, and species of the compound beings. So that we ought not upon any account to conclude, that if there be rational inhabitants in the moon or Mars, or any unknown planets of other systems, they must therefore have human nature, or be involved in the circumstances of our world. And thus much was necessary to be here inculcated, (which will obviate and preclude the most considerable objections of our adversaries,) that we do not determine the final causes and usefulness of the systematical parts of the world, merely as they have respect to the exigencies or conveniencies of human life.

[* some in their natural perfections higher than human souls, others inferior. But; 1*st ed.* "some higher in natural perfections, others inferior to human souls. But."—D.]

[† kind; 1*st ed.* "kinds."—D.]

Let us now turn our thoughts and imaginations to the frame of our system, if there we may trace any visible footsteps of divine wisdom and beneficence. But we are all liable to many mistakes by the prejudices of childhood and youth, which few of us ever correct by a serious scrutiny in our riper years, and a contemplation of the *phenomena* of nature in their causes and beginnings. What we have always seen to be done in one constant and uniform manner, we are apt to imagine there was but that one way of doing it, and it could not be otherwise. This is a great error and impediment in a disquisition of this nature; to remedy which, we ought to consider every thing as not yet in being, and then diligently examine if it must needs have been at all, or what other ways it might have been as possibly as the present; and if we find a greater good and utility in the present constitution than would have accrued either from the total privation of it, or from other frames and structures that might as possibly have been as it, we may then reasonably conclude, that the present constitution proceeded neither from the necessity of material causes, nor the blind shuffles of an imaginary chance, but from an intelligent and good Being, that formed it that particular way out of choice and design. And especially, if this usefulness be conspicuous not in one or a few instances only,* but in a long train and series of things, this will give us a firm and infallible assurance that we have not passed a wrong judgment.

I. Let us proceed, therefore, by this excellent rule in the contemplation of our system. 'Tis evident that all the planets receive heat and light from the body of the sun. Our own earth in particular would be barren and desolate, a dead dark lump of clay, without the benign influence of the solar rays; which, without question, is true of all the other planets. It is *good*, therefore, that there should be a sun, to warm and cherish the seeds of plants, and excite them to vegetation; to

[* few instances only; 1*st ed.* "few only."—D.]

impart an uninterrupted light to all parts of this* system for the subsistence of animals. But how came the sun to be luminous? not from the necessity of natural causes, or the constitution of the heavens. All the planets might have moved about him in the same orbs, and the same degrees of velocity, as now; and yet the sun might have been an opaque and cold body like them. For, as the six primary planets revolve about him, so the secondary ones are moved about them; the moon about the earth, the satellites about Jupiter, and others about Saturn; the one as regularly as the other, in the same sesquialteral† proportion of the times of their periodical revolutions to the semidiameters of their orbs.‡ So that, though we suppose the present existence and conservation of the system, yet the sun might have been a body without light or heat, of the same kind with the earth, and Jupiter, and Saturn. But then what horrid darkness and desolation must have reigned in the world! It had been unfit for the divine purposes in creating vegetable, and sensitive, and rational creatures. It was, therefore, the contrivance and choice of a *wise and good* Being, that the central sun should be a lucid body, to communicate warmth, and light, and life to the planets around him.

II. We have shewed in our last, that the concentric revolutions of the planets about the sun proceed from a compound motion; a gravitation towards the sun, which is a constant energy infused into matter by the Author of all things, and a projected transverse impulse in tangents to their several orbs, that was impressed at first by the divine arm, and will carry them around till the end of the world. But now, admitting that gravity may be essential to matter, and that a transverse impulse might be acquired too by natural causes; yet, to make all the planets move about the sun in circular orbs,

[* this; 1*st ed.* "his."—D.]

[† sesquialteral; *so other eds.: ed.* 1735, "sesquilateral."—D.]

[‡ of the times of their periodical revolutions to the semidiameters of their orbs; 1*st ed.* "of their periodical motions to their orbs."—D.]

there must be given to each a determinate impulse; these present particular degrees of velocity which they now have, in proportion to their distances from the sun, and to the quantity of the solar matter. For had the velocities of the several planets been greater or less than they are now, at the same distances from the sun; or had their distances from the sun,[r] or the quantity of the sun's matter, and consequently his attractive power, been greater or less than they are now, with the same velocities; they would not have revolved in concentric circles as they do, but have moved in hyperbolas, or in ellipses* very eccentric. The same may be said of the velocities of the secondary planets with respect to their distances from the centres of their orbs, and to the quantities of the matter of those central bodies. Now, that all these distances, and motions, and quantities of matter should be so accurately and harmoniously adjusted in this great variety of our system, is above the fortuitous hits of blind material causes, and must certainly flow from that eternal fountain of wisdom, the Creator of heaven and earth, who *always acts geometrically*,[s] by just and adequate numbers, and weights, and measures. And let us examine it further by our critical rule. Are the present revolutions in circular orbs more beneficial than the other would be? If the planets had moved in those lines above named, sometimes they would have approached to the sun as near as the orb of Mercury, and sometimes have exorbitated beyond the distance of Saturn; and some have quite left the sun without ever returning. Now the very constitution of a planet would be corrupted and destroyed by such a change of the interval between it and the sun; no living thing could have endured such unspeakable excesses of heat and cold; all the animals of our earth must inevitably have perished, or rather never have been. So that

[r] Newton. Philosoph. Natural. Princip. Math.

[* hyperbolas, or in ellipses; 1*st ed.* "hyperbolas, or parabolas, or in ellipses."—D.]

[s] Ὁ θεὸς ἀεὶ γεωμετρεῖ. Plat. [apud Plutarch. *Conv. Disp.* lib. viii. 2.—*Mor.* t. iii. p. 663. ed. Wyttenb.—D.]

as sure as it is *good, very good*,[t] that human nature should exist, so certain it is that the circular revolutions of the earth (and planets), rather than those other motions, which might as possibly have been, do declare not only the power of God, but his *wisdom and goodness*.

III. It is manifest, by our last discourse, that the ethereal spaces are perfectly fluid; they neither assist nor retard, neither guide nor divert the revolutions of the planets, which roll through those regions as free and unresisted as if they moved in a *vacuum*: so that any of them might as possibly have moved in opposite courses to the present, and in planes crossing the plane of the ecliptic in any kind of angles. Now, if the system had been fortuitously formed by the convening matter of a chaos, how is it conceivable that all the planets, both primary and secondary, should revolve the same way, from the west to the east, and that in the same plane too, without any considerable variation? No natural and necessary cause could so determine their motions; and 'tis millions of millions of millions odds* to an unit in such a cast of a chance. Such an apt and regular harmony, such an admirable order and beauty, must deservedly be ascribed to divine art and conduct: especially if we consider that the smallest plánets are situated nearest the sun and each other; whereas Jupiter and Saturn, that are vastly greater than the rest, and have many satellites about them, are wisely removed to the extreme regions of the system, and placed at an immense distance one from the other. For even now, at this wide interval, they are observed in their conjunctions to disturb one another's motions a little by their gravitating powers: but if such vast masses of matter had been situated much nearer to the sun, or to each other, (as they might as easily have been, for any mechanical or fortuitous agent,) they must necessarily have caused a considerable disturbance and disorder in the whole system.

[t] Gen. i.

[* millions of millions of millions odds; 1*st ed.* "millions of millions odds."—D.]

IV. But let us consider the particular situation of our earth, and its distance from the sun. It is now placed so conveniently, that plants thrive and flourish in it, and animals live; this is matter of fact, and beyond all dispute. But how came it to pass, at the beginning, that the earth moved in its present orb? We have shewn* before, that if gravity and a projected motion be fitly proportioned, any planet would freely revolve at any assignable distance within the space of the whole system. Was it mere chance, then, or divine counsel and choice, that constituted the earth in its present situation? To know this, we will inquire if this particular distance from the sun be better for our earth and its creatures than a greater or less would have been. We may be mathematically certain, that the heat of the sun is according to the density of the sunbeams, and is reciprocally proportional to the square of the distance from the body of the sun. Now, by this calculation,[u] suppose the earth should be removed and placed nearer to the sun, and revolve, for instance, in the orbit of Mercury; there the whole ocean would even boil with extremity of heat, and be all exhaled into vapours; all plants and animals would be scorched and consumed in that fiery furnace. But suppose the earth should be carried to the great distance of Saturn; there the whole globe would be one frigid zone; the deepest seas under the very equator would be frozen to the bottom; there would be no life, no germination, nor any thing that comes now under our knowledge or senses. It was much better, therefore, that the earth should move where it does, than in a much greater or less interval from the body of the sun. And if you place it at any other distance, either less or more than Saturn or Mercury, you will still alter it for the worse proportionally to the change. It was situated, therefore, where it is by the wisdom of some voluntary agent, and not by the blind motions of fortune or fate. If any one should†

[* shewn; 1*st ed.* "shewed."—D.]

[u] Newton, ibid. p. 415.

[† should; 1*st ed.* "shall."—D.]

think with himself, how then can any animal at all live* in Mercury and Saturn, in such intense degrees of heat and cold? let him only consider, that the matter of each planet may have a different density, and texture, and form, which will dispose and qualify it to be acted on by greater or less degrees of heat, according to their several situations; and that the laws of vegetation, and life, and sustenance, and propagation, are the arbitrary pleasure of God, and may vary in all planets according to the divine appointment, and the exigencies of things, in manners incomprehensible to our imaginations. 'Tis enough for our purpose to discern the tokens of wisdom in the placing of our earth; if its present constitution would be spoiled and destroyed, if we could not wear flesh and blood, if we could not have human nature at those different distances.

V. We have all learnt, from the doctrine of the sphere, that the earth revolves with a double motion. For, while it is carried around the sun in the *orbis magnus* once a-year, it perpetually wheels about its own axis once in a day and a night; so that in twenty-four hours' space it hath turned all the parts of the equinoctial to the rays of the sun. Now, the uses of this vertiginous motion are very conspicuous: for this is it that gives day and night successively over the face of the whole earth, and makes it habitable all around. Without this diurnal rotation, one hemisphere would lie dead and torpid in perpetual darkness and frost, and the best part of the other would be burnt up and depopulated by so permanent a heat. It is better, therefore, that the earth should often move† about its own centre, and make these useful vicissitudes of night and day, than expose always the same side to the action of the sun. But how came it to be so moved? Not from any necessity of the laws of motion, or the system of the heavens: it might annually have compassed the sun, and yet

[* any animal at all live; 1*st ed.* "any thing live."—D.]
[† should often move; 1*st ed.* "should move."—D.]

have always turned the same hemisphere towards it. This* is matter of fact and experiment in the motion of the moon, which is carried about the earth in the very same manner as the earth about the sun, and yet always shews the same face to us. She, indeed,† notwithstanding this, turns all her globe to the sun, by moving in her menstrual orb, and enjoys night and day alternately, one day of hers being equal to about fourteen days and nights of ours. But should the earth move in the same manner about the sun as the moon does about the earth, one half‡ of it could never see the day, but must eternally be condemned to solitude and darkness. That the earth, therefore, frequently revolves§ about its own centre, is another eminent token of the divine wisdom and goodness.

VI. But let us compare the mutual proportion of these diurnal and annual revolutions; for they are distinct from one another, and have a different degree of velocity. The earth rolls once about its axis in a natural day; in which time all the parts of the equator move something more than three of

[* and yet have always turned the same hemisphere towards it. This; 1*st ed.* "and yet never have once turned upon its own axis. This."—D.]

[† to us. She, indeed; 1*st ed.* "to us, not once wheeling upon her own centre. She, indeed."—John Keill, the eminent mathematician and philosopher, then of Bal. College, Oxford, in his first published work, *An Examination of Burnet's Theory of the Earth, &c.* 1698, influenced, as Dr. Monk thinks, by "a wish to ingratiate himself with the enemies of Bentley," (*Life of B.* vol. i. p. 110.) went out of his way to notice the error in this passage as it originally stood: "whereas," says he, after quoting it, "'tis evident to any one who thinks, that the moon shews the same face to us for this very reason, because she does turn once, in the time of her period, about her own centre. But it were to be wished that great critics would confine their labours to their Lexicons," &c. p. 70. In consequence of this attack, Bentley (who had overlooked Newton's discovery, that the moon does revolve about her axis,) left out the words, "not once wheeling upon her own centre," in the edition of 1699. Wotton justly censured Keill's indecent treatment of his friend: see *Defence of the Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning*, 1705, p. 6, &c. Keill cavilled at another passage of this sermon, vide note, p. 187.—D.]

[‡ But should the earth move in the same manner about the sun as the moon does about the earth, one half; 1*st ed.* "But should the earth be deprived of its diurnal motion, one half."—D.]

[§ therefore frequently revolves; 1*st ed.* "therefore revolves."—D.]

the earth's diameters, which makes about 1100 in the space of a year. But within the same space of a year,* the centre of the earth is carried above fifty times as far once round the *orbis magnus*, whose wideness we now assume to be 20,000 terrestrial diameters. So that the annual motion is more than fifty times swifter than the diurnal rotation, though we measure the latter from the equator, where the celerity is the greatest. But it must needs be acknowledged, since the earth revolves not upon a material and rugged, but a geometrical plane,[x] that the proportions of the diurnal and annual motions may† be varied in innumerable degrees; any of which might have happened as probably as the present. What was it, then, that prescribed this particular celerity to each motion, this proportion and temperament between them both? Let us examine it by our former rule, if there be any *meliority* in the present constitution; if any considerable change would be for the worse. We will suppose, then, that the *annual* motion is accelerated doubly; so that a periodical revolution would be performed in six months. Such a change would be pernicious, not only because the earth could not move in a circular orb, which we have considered before; but because, the seasons being then twice as short as they are now, the cold winter would overtake us before our corn and fruits could possibly be ripe. But shall this motion be as much retarded, and the seasons lengthened in the same proportion? This, too, would be as fatal as the other; for in most countries the earth would be so parched and effete by the drought of the summer, that it would afford still but one harvest, as it doth at the present; which then would not be a sufficient store for the consumption of a year, that would be twice as long as now.‡ But let us suppose, that the *diurnal* rotation

[* space of a year; 1*st ed.* "annual time."—D.]

[x] Tacquet de Circulorum Volutionibus.

[† that the proportions of the diurnal and annual motions may; 1*st ed.* "that their proportions may."—D.]

[‡ of a year, that would be twice as long as now; 1*st ed.* "of a double year."—D.]

be* either considerably swifter or slower. And first, let it be retarded, so as to make (for example) but twelve circuits in a year; then every day and night would be as long as thirty† are now, not so fitly proportioned neither to the common affairs of life, nor to the exigencies of sleep and sustenance in a constitution of flesh and blood. But, let it then be accelerated, and wheel a thousand times about its centre, while the centre describes one circle about the sun; then an equinoctial day would consist but of four hours, which would be an inconvenient change to the inhabitants of the earth; such hasty nights as those would give very unwelcome interruptions to our labours and journeys, and other transactions of the world. It is *better,* therefore, that the diurnal and annual motions should be so proportioned as they are. Let it therefore be ascribed to the transcendent wisdom and benignity of that God, *who hath made all things very good, and loveth all things that he hath made.*

VII. But let us consider, not the quantity and proportion only, but the mode also of this diurnal motion. You must conceive an imaginary plane, which, passing through the centres of the sun and the earth, extends itself on all sides as far as the firmament: this plane is called the ecliptic, and in this the centre of the earth is perpetually carried without any deviation. But then the axis of the earth, about which its diurnal rotation is made, is not erect to this plane of the ecliptic, but inclines toward it from the perpendiculum, in an angle of twenty-three degrees and a half. Now, why is the axis of the earth in this particular posture, rather than any other? Did it happen by chance, or proceed from design? To determine this question, let us see, as we have done before, if this be more beneficial to us than any other constitution. We all know, from the very elements of astronomy, that this inclined position of the axis, which keeps always the same direction, and a constant parallelism to itself, is the sole cause of these grateful and needful vicissitudes of the four seasons of the year, and the variation in length of

[* be; 1*st ed.* "is."—D.] [† thirty; 1*st ed.* "fifteen."—D.]

days. If we take away the *inclination*, it would absolutely undo these northern nations; the sun would never come nearer us than he doth now on the tenth of March or* twelfth of September. But would we rather part with the *parallelism?* Let us suppose, then, that the axis of the earth keeps always the same inclination toward the body of the sun; this, indeed, would cause a variety of days, and nights, and seasons on the earth; but then every particular country would have always the same diversity of day and night, and the same constitution of season, without any alteration:† some would always have long nights and short days, others, again, perpetually long days and short nights; one climate would be scorched and sweltered with everlasting dog-days, while an eternal December blasted another: this surely is not quite so good as the present order of seasons. But, shall the axis rather observe no constant inclination to any thing, but vary and waver at uncertain times and places? This would be a happy constitution indeed. There could be no health, no life, nor subsistence in such an irregular system; by those surprising nods of the pole we might be tossed backward or forward in a moment from‡ January to June; nay, possibly, from the January of Greenland to the June of Abyssinia. It is *better*, therefore, upon all accounts, that the axis should be continued in its present posture and direction: so that this also is a signal character of divine wisdom and goodness.

But, because several have imagined that this skue posture of the axis is a most unfortunate and pernicious thing; that, if the poles had been erect to the plane of the ecliptic, all mankind would have enjoyed a very paradise upon earth, a perpetual spring, an eternal calm and serenity, and the longevity of Methuselah, without pains or diseases; we are obliged to consider it a little further. And first, as to the *universal and perpetual spring*, 'tis a mere poetical fancy, and

[* or; 1*st ed.* "or the."—D.]
[† alteration; 1*st ed.* "alternation."—D.]
[‡ forward in a moment from; 1*st ed.* "forward from."—D.]

(bating the equality of days and nights, which is a thing of small value) as to the other properties of a spring, it is* naturally impossible, being repugnant to the very form of the globe: for, to those people that dwell under or near the equator, this spring would be a most pestilent and insupportable summer; and as for those countries that are nearer the poles, in which number are our own and the most considerable nations of the world, a perpetual spring will not do their business; they must have longer days, a nearer approach of the sun, and a less obliquity of his rays; they must have a summer and a harvest-time too, to ripen their grain, and fruits, and vines, or else they must bid an eternal adieu to the very best of their sustenance. It is† plain, that the centre of the earth must move all along in the *orbis magnus*, whether we suppose a perpetual equinox, or an oblique position of the axis. So that the whole globe would continue in the same distance from the sun, and receive the same quantity of heat from him in a year or any assignable time, in either hypothesis. Though the axis then had been perpendicular, yet take the whole year about, and the earth would have had the same measure of heat that it has now.‡ So that here lies the question, whether is more beneficial, that the inhabitants of the earth should have the yearly§ quantity of heat distributed equally every day, or so disposed as it is; a greater share of it in summer, and in winter a less? It must needs be allowed,

[* nights, which is a thing of small value) as to the other properties of a spring, it is; 1*st ed.* "nights, a thing of small value) as to the other properties, is."—D.]

[† It is; 1*st ed.* "For it is."—D.]

[‡ and the earth would have had the same measure of heat that it has now; 1*st ed.* "and we should have had the same measure of heat that we have now."—In the ed. of 1699, Bentley altered this sentence into its present form, substituting "the earth" for "we," because Keill, in his *Examination of Burnet's Theory of the Earth*, 1698, *&c.* p. 70 (see note p. 183 of the present vol.), had cavilled at the latter word, choosing to understand by it *the inhabitants of the temperate zone*, and not, as the author certainly meant, *the inhabitants of the whole globe*. Vide Wotton's *Defence of the Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning*, 1705, p. 6.—D.]

[§ that the inhabitants of the earth should have the yearly; 1*st ed.* "that we should have the same yearly."—D.]

that the temperate zones have* no heat to spare in summer; 'tis very well if it be sufficient for the maturation of fruits. Now, this being granted, 'tis as certain and manifest that an even distribution of the yearly† heat would never have brought those fruits to maturity; as this is a known and familiar experiment, that such a quantity of fuel all kindled at once will cause water to boil, which being lighted gradually and successively will never be able to do it. It is clear, therefore, that in the constitution of a perpetual equinox, the best part of the globe would be desolate and useless; and, as to that little that could be inhabited, there is no reason to expect that it would constantly enjoy that admired *calm and serenity*. If the assertion were true, yet some perhaps may think, that such a felicity, as would make navigation impossible, is not much to be envied. But it's altogether precarious, and has no necessary foundation neither upon reason nor experience. For the winds and rains, and other affections of the atmosphere, do not solely depend (as that assertion supposeth) upon the course of the sun; but partly, and perhaps most frequently, upon steams and exhalations from subterraneous heat; upon the positions of the moon, the situations of seas, or mountains, or lakes, or woods, and many other unknown or uncertain causes. So that, though the course of the sun should be invariable, and never swerve from the equator; yet the temperament of the air would be mutable nevertheless, according to the absence or presence, or various mixture of the other causes. The ancient philosophers, for many ages together, unanimously taught, that the torrid zone was not habitable. The reasons that they went upon were very specious and probable, till the experience of these latter ages evinced them to be erroneous. They argued from celestial causes only, the constant vicinity of the sun, and the directness of his rays; never suspecting that the body of the earth had so great an efficiency in the changes of the air; and that then could be the coldest and rainiest season, the winter of

[* the temperate zones have; 1*st ed.* "we have."—D.]
[† the yearly; 1*st ed.* "the same yearly."—D.]

the year, when the sun was the nearest of all, and steered directly over men's heads. Which is warning sufficient to deter* any man from expecting such eternal serenity and halcyon days from so incompetent and partial a cause as the constant course of the sun in the equinoctial circle. What general condition and temperament of air would follow upon that supposition, we cannot possibly define; for 'tis not caused by certain and regular motions, nor subject to mathematical calculations. But, if we may make a conjecture from the present constitution, we shall hardly wish for a perpetual equinox to save the charges of weather-glasses: for 'tis very well known that the months of March and September, the two equinoxes of our year, are the most windy and tempestuous, the most unsettled and unequable of seasons in most countries of the world. Now, if this notion of an uniform calm and serenity be false or precarious, then even the last supposed advantage, the *constant health and longevity* of men, must be given up also, as a groundless conceit: for this (according to the assertors themselves) doth solely, as an effect of nature, depend upon the other. Nay, further; though we should allow them their perpetual calm and equability of heat, they will never be able to prove that therefore men would be so vivacious as they would have us believe. Nay, perhaps the contrary may be inferred, if we may argue from present† experience; for the inhabitants of the torrid zone, who suffer the least and shortest recesses of the sun, and are within one step and degree of a perpetual equinox, are not only shorter lived (generally speaking) than other nations nearer the poles, but inferior to them in strength, and stature, and courage, and in all the capacities of the mind. It appears, therefore, that the gradual vicissitudes of heat and cold are so far from shortening the thread of man's life, or impairing his intellectual faculties, that very probably they both prolong the one, in some measure, and exalt and advance the other. So that still we do profess to adore the

[* to deter; 1*st ed.* "to have deterred."—D.]
[† from present; 1*st ed.* "from the present."—D.]

divine wisdom and goodness for this variety of seasons, for *seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter.*[y]

VIII. Come we now to consider the atmosphere, and the exterior frame and face of the globe, if we may find any tracks and footsteps of wisdom in the constitution of them. I need not now inform you, that the air is a thin fluid body, endued with elasticity or springiness, and capable of condensation and rarefaction; and, should it be* much more expanded or condensed than it naturally is, no animals could live and breathe:[z] it is probable also that the vapours could not be duly raised and supported in it; which at once would deprive the earth of all its ornament and glory, of all its living inhabitants and vegetables too. But 'tis certainly known and demonstrated, that the condensation and expansion of any portion of the air is always proportional to the weight and pressure incumbent upon it: so that if the atmosphere had been either much greater or less than it is, as it might easily have been, it would have had in its lowest region on the surface of the earth a much greater density or tenuity of texture, and consequently have been unserviceable for vegetation and life. It must needs, therefore, be an intelligent Being that could so justly adapt it to those excellent purposes. 'Tis concluded by astronomers, that the atmosphere of the moon hath no clouds nor rains, but a perpetual and uniform serenity; because nothing discoverable in the lunar surface is ever covered and absconded from us by† the interposition of any clouds or mists, but such as rise from our own globe. Now, if the atmosphere of our earth had been of such a constitution, there could nothing that now grows or breathes in it have been formed or preserved; human nature must have been quite obliterated out of the works of‡ creation. If our air had not

[y] Gen. viii.

[* rarefaction; and, should it be; 1*st ed.* "rarefaction. Neither can you be ignorant, that if the air should be."—D.]

[z] See Mr. Boyle Of the Air.

[† absconded from us by; 1*st ed.* "absconded by."—D.]

[‡ of; 1*st ed.* "of the."—D.]

been a springy elastical body, no animal could have exercised the very function of respiration; and yet the ends and uses of respiration are not served by that springiness, but by some other unknown and singular quality. For the air, that in exhausted receivers of air-pumps is exhaled from minerals, and flesh, and fruits, and liquors, is as true and genuine as to elasticity and density, or rarefaction, as that we respire in; and yet this factitious air is so far from being fit to be breathed in, that it kills animals in a moment, even sooner than the very absence of all air, than a vacuum itself.[a] All which do infer the most admirable providence of the Author of nature, who foreknew the necessity of rains and dews to the present structure of plants, and the uses of respiration to animals; and therefore created those correspondent properties in the atmosphere of the earth.

IX. In the next place, let us consider the ample provision of waters, those inexhausted treasures of the ocean: and,[b] though some have grudged the great share that it takes of the surface of the earth, yet we shall propose this too as a conspicuous mark and character of the wisdom of God. For, that we may not now say that the vast Atlantic Ocean is really greater riches, and of more worth to the world, than if it was changed into a fifth continent; and that the dry land is as yet much too big for its inhabitants; and that before they shall want room by increasing and multiplying, there may be *new heavens and a new earth;* we dare venture to affirm that these copious stores of waters are no more than necessary for the present constitution of our globe. For, is not the whole substance of all vegetables mere modified water? and consequently of all animals too; all which either feed upon vegetables, or prey upon one another. Is not an immense quantity of it continually exhaled by the sun, to fill the atmosphere with vapours and clouds, and feed the plants of the earth with the balm of dews, and the fatness of showers? It seems

[a] Mr. Boyle's Second Continuation of Physico-mechanical Experiments about the Air.

[b] Lucret. [v. 204.—D.] Et mare, quod late terrarum distinet oras.

incredible at first hearing, that all the blood in our bodies should circulate in a trice, in a very few minutes; but I believe it would be more surprising, if we knew the short and swift periods of the great circulation of water, that vital blood of the earth, which composeth and nourisheth all things. If we could but compute that prodigious mass of it that is daily thrown into the channel of the sea from all the rivers of the world, we should then know and admire how much is perpetually evaporated and cast again upon the continents, to supply those innumerable streams. And, indeed, hence we may discover, not only the *use* and *necessity*, but the *cause* too of the vastness of the ocean. I never yet heard of any nation that complained they had too broad, or too deep, or too many rivers; or wished they were either smaller or fewer; they understand better than so, how to value and esteem those inestimable gifts of nature. Now, supposing that the multitude and largeness of rivers ought to continue as great as now, we can easily prove that the extent of the ocean could be no less than it is. For it's evident and necessary, (if we follow the most fair and probable hypothesis, that the origin of fountains is from vapours and rain) that the receptacle of waters, into which the mouths of all those rivers must empty themselves, ought to have so spacious a surface, that as much water may be continually brushed off by the winds, and exhaled by the sun, as (besides what falls again in showers upon its own surface) is brought into it by all the rivers. Now the surface of the ocean is just so wide, and no wider; for, if more was evaporated than returns into it again, the sea would become less; if less was evaporated, it would grow bigger. So that, because since the memory of all ages it hath continued at a stand, without considerable variation, and if it hath gained ground upon one country, hath lost as much in another; it must consequently be exactly proportioned to the present constitution of rivers. How rash, therefore, and vain are those busy projectors in speculation, that imagine they could recover to the world many new and noble countries, in the most happy and temperate climates, without any damage to the old ones, could this same mass of

the ocean be lodged and circumscribed in a much deeper channel, and within narrower shores! For, by how much they would diminish the present extent of the sea, so much they would impair the fertility, and fountains, and rivers of the earth; because the quantity of vapours, that must be exhaled to supply all these, would be lessened proportionally to the bounds of the ocean; for the vapours are not to be measured from the bulk of the water, but from the space of the surface. So that this also doth infer the superlative wisdom and goodness of God, that he hath treasured up the waters in so deep and spacious a storehouse, *the place that he hath founded and appointed for them.*[c]

X. But some men[d] are out of love with the features and mien of our earth; they do not like this rugged and irregular surface, these precipices and valleys, and the gaping channel of the ocean. This with them is deformity, and rather carries the face of a ruin, or a rude and indigested lump of atoms that casually convened so, than a work of divine artifice. They would have the vast body of a planet to be as elegant and round as a factitious globe represents it; to be every where smooth and equable, and as plain as the Elysian fields. Let us examine what weighty reasons they have to disparage the present constitution of nature in so injurious a manner. Why, if we suppose the ocean to be dry, and that we look down upon the empty channel from some higher region of the air, how horrid, and ghastly, and unnatural would it look! Now, admitting this supposition, let us suppose too that the soil of this dry channel were* covered with grass and trees in

[c] Psal. civ.

[d] Nequaquam nobis divinitus esse creatam
Naturam rerum, tanta stat prædita culpa.
Principio, quantum cœli tegit impetus ingens,
Inde avidam partem montes sylvæque ferarum
Possedere; tenent rupes, vastæque paludes,
Et mare, quod late terrarum distinet oras.—Lucret. lib. v.

[199.—In the first line of this passage the vulgar reading is .... "esse *paratam.*" Bentley gives "*creatam*" from lib. ii. 180. where the line occurs with that variation.—D.]

[* were; 1*st ed.* "is."—D.]

manner of the continent, and then see what would follow. If a man could be carried asleep and placed in the very middle of this dry ocean, it must be allowed that he could not distinguish it from the inhabited earth. For if the bottom should be unequal, with shelves, and rocks, and precipices, and gulfs; these, being now apparelled with a vesture of plants, would only resemble the mountains and valleys that he was accustomed to before. But very probably he would wake in a large and smooth plain: for though the bottom of the sea were gradually inclined and sloping from the shore to the middle, yet the additional acclivity, above what a level would seem to have, would be imperceptible in so short a prospect as he could take of it: so that, to make this man sensible what a deep cavity he was placed in, he must be carried so high in the air till he could see at one view the whole breadth of the channel, and so compare the depression of the middle with the elevation of the banks. But then a very small skill in mathematics is enough to instruct us, that before he could arrive to that distance from the earth, all the inequality of surface would be lost to his view; the wide ocean would appear to him like an even and uniform plane, (uniform as to its level, though not as to light and shade,) though every rock of the sea was as high as the Pico of Teneriff. But, though we should grant that the dry gulf of the ocean would appear vastly hollow and horrible from the top of a high cloud, yet what a way of reasoning is this, from the freaks of imagination and impossible suppositions! Is the sea ever likely to be evaporated by the sun, or to be emptied with buckets? Why then must we fancy this impossible dryness, and then upon that fictitious account calumniate nature as deformed and ruinous, and unworthy of a divine Author? Is there then any physical deformity in the fabric of a human body, because our imagination can strip it of its muscles and skin, and shew us the scragged and knotty backbone, the gaping and ghastly jaws, and all the skeleton underneath? We have shewed before, that the sea could not be much narrower than it is, without a great loss to the world: and must we now have an ocean

of mere flats and shallows, to the utter ruin of navigation, for fear our heads should turn giddy at the imagination of gaping abysses and unfathomable gulfs? But however, they may say, the sea-shores at least might* have been even and uniform, not crooked and broken, as they are, into innumerable angles, and creeks, and inlets, and bays, without beauty or order, which carry the marks more of chance and confusion than of the production of a wise Creator. And would not this be† a fine bargain indeed? to part with all our commodious ports and harbours, which, the greater the inlet is, are so much the better, for the imaginary pleasure of an open and straight shore, without any retreat or shelter from the winds; which would make the sea of no use at all as to navigation and commerce. But what apology can we make for the horrid deformity of rocks and crags, of naked and broken cliffs, of long ridges of barren mountains, in the convenientest latitudes for habitation and fertility, could but those‡ rude heaps of rubbish and ruins be removed out of the way? We have one general and sufficient answer for all seeming defects or disorders in the constitution of land or sea; that we do not contend to have the earth pass for a paradise, or to make a very heaven of our globe; we reckon it only as the land of our *peregrination*, and aspire after *a better and a celestial country*.[e] 'Tis enough, if it be so framed and constituted, that by a careful contemplation of it we have great reason to acknowledge and adore the divine wisdom and benignity of its Author. But, to wave this general reply, let the objectors consider, that these supposed irregularities must necessarily§ come to pass from the established laws of mechanism and the ordinary course of nature. For, supposing the existence of sea and mountains, if the banks of that

[* But however, they may say, the sea-shores at least might; 1*st ed.* "But, however, the sea-shores at least should."—D.]

[† Creator. And would not this be; 1*st ed.* "Creator. This would be."—D.]

[‡ could but those; 1*st ed.* "could those."—D.]

[§ must necessarily; 1*st ed.* "must have necessarily."—D.]

[e] Heb. xi.

sea must never be jagged and torn by the impetuous assaults or the silent underminings of waves; if violent rains and tempests must not wash down the earth and gravel from the tops of some of those mountains, and expose their naked ribs to the face of the sun; if the seeds of subterraneous minerals must not ferment, and sometimes cause earthquakes and furious eruptions of volcanos, and tumble down broken rocks, and lay them in confusion; then either all things must have been overruled miraculously by the immediate interposition of God, without any mechanical affections or settled laws of nature, or else the body of the earth must have been as fixed as gold, or as hard as adamant, and wholly unfit for human* habitation. So that if it *was good* in the sight of God,[f] that the present plants and animals, and human souls united to flesh and blood, should be upon this earth under a settled constitution of nature; these supposed inconveniences, as they were foreseen and permitted by the Author of that nature, as necessary consequences of such a constitution, so they cannot infer the least imperfection in his wisdom and goodness: and to murmur at them is as unreasonable as to complain that he hath made us men, and not angels; that he hath placed us upon this planet, and not upon some other, in this or another system, which may be thought better than ours. Let them also consider, that this objected deformity is in our imaginations only, and not really in things† themselves. There is no universal reason (I mean such as is not confined to human fancy, but will reach through the whole intellectual universe,) that a figure by us called regular, which hath equal sides and angles, is absolutely more beautiful than any irregular one. All pulchritude is relative; and all bodies are truly and physically beautiful under all possible shapes and proportions, that are good in their kind, that are fit for their proper uses and ends of their natures. We ought not then to believe that the banks of the ocean are really deformed, because they have not the form of a regular bulwark; nor

[* human; 1*st ed.* "our."—D.]

[† in things; 1*st ed.* "in the things."—D.]

[f] Gen. i.

that the mountains are out of shape,* because they are not exact pyramids or cones; nor that the stars are unskilfully placed, because they are not all situated at uniform distance.† These are not natural irregularities, but with respect to our fancies only; nor are they incommodious to the true uses of life and the designs of man's being on the earth. And let them further consider,‡ that these ranges of barren mountains, by condensing the vapours, and producing rains, and fountains, and rivers, give the very plains and valleys themselves that fertility they boast of; that those hills§ and mountains supply us and the stock of nature with a great variety of excellent plants. If there were no inequalities in the surface of the earth, nor in the seasons of the year, we should lose a considerable, share of the vegetable kingdom: for all plants will not grow in an uniform level and the same temper of soil, nor with the same degree of heat. Nay, let them lastly consider,‖ that to those hills and mountains we are obliged for all our metals, and with them for all the conveniences and comforts of life. To deprive us of metals is to make us mere savages; to change our corn or rice for the old Arcadian diet, our houses and cities for dens and caves, and our clothing for skins of beasts; 'tis to bereave us of all arts and sciences, of history and letters; nay, of revealed religion too, that inestimable favour of heaven: for, without the benefit of letters, the whole Gospel would be a mere¶ tradition and old cabbala, without certainty, without authority. Who would part with these solid and substantial blessings for the little fantastical pleasantness of a smooth uniform convexity

[* out of shape; 1*st ed.* "mishapen."—D.]

[† distance; 1*st ed.* "distances."—D.]

[‡ earth. And let them further consider; 1*st ed.* "earth. Let them consider."—D.]

[§ boast of; that those hills; 1*st ed.* "boast of. Let them consider that those hills."—D.]

[‖ heat. Nay, let them lastly consider; 1*st ed.* "heat. Let them consider."—D.]

[¶ heaven: for, without the benefit of letters, the whole Gospel would be a mere; 1*st ed.* "by making the whole Gospel a mere."—D.]

and rotundity of a globe? And yet the misfortune of it is, that the pleasant view of their* imaginary globe, as well as the deformed spectacle of our† true one, is founded upon impossible suppositions. For that‡ equal convexity could never be seen and enjoyed by any man living. The inhabitants of such an earth could have only the short prospect of a little circular plane about three miles around them; though neither woods, nor hedges, nor artificial banks, should intercept it; which little, too, would appear to have an acclivity on all sides from the spectators; so that every man would have the displeasure§ of fancying himself the lowest, and that he always dwelt and moved in a bottom. Nay, considering that in such a constitution of the earth they could have no means nor instruments of mathematical knowledge, there is great reason to believe, that the period of the final dissolution might overtake them, ere they would have known or had any suspicion that they walked upon a round ball. Must we, therefore, to make this convexity of the earth discernible to the eye, suppose a man to be lifted up a great height in the air, that he may have a very spacious horizon under one view? But then, again, because of the distance, the convexity and gibbousness would vanish away; he would only see below him a great circular flat, as level, to his thinking, as the face of the moon. Are there then such ravishing charms in a dull, unvaried flat, to make a sufficient compensation *for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills?*ᵍ Nay, we appeal to the sentence of mankind, *if a land of hills and valleys* has not more pleasure too, and beauty, than an uniform flat? which flat, if ever‖ it may be said to be very delightful, is then only, when 'tis viewed from

[* their; 1*st ed.* "this."—D.] [† our; 1*st ed.* "the."—D.]

[‡ that; 1*st ed.* "this."—D.]

[§ displeasure; 1*st ed.* "satisfaction."—D.]

ᵍ Deut. xxxiii. 15.

[‖ *valleys* has not more pleasure too, and beauty, than an uniform flat? which flat, if ever; 1*st ed.* "*valleys*, with an infinite variety of scenes and prospects, besides the profit that accrues from it, have not more of beauty too, and pleasantness, than a wide uniform plain; which if ever."—D.]

the top of a hill. What were the Tempe of Thessaly,[h] so celebrated in ancient story for their unparalleled pleasantness, but a vale divided with a river and terminated with hills? Are not all the descriptions of poets embellished with such ideas, when they would represent any places of superlative delight, any* blissful seats of the Muses or the Nymphs, any sacred habitations of gods or goddesses? They will never admit that a wide flat can be pleasant, no, not in the very Elysian fields;[i] but these,† too, must be diversified with depressed valleys and swelling ascents. They cannot imagine even Paradise to be a place of pleasure,[k] nor heaven itself to be heaven without them.[l] Let this, therefore, be another argument of the divine wisdom and goodness, that the surface of the earth is not uniformly convex, (as many think it would naturally have been, if mechanically formed by a chaos,) but distinguished with mountains and valleys, and furrowed from pole to pole with the deep channel of the sea; and that, because of the τὸ βελτίον, it is better that it should be so.

Give me leave to make one short inference from what has been said, which shall finish this present discourse, and with it our task for the year. We have clearly discovered many final causes and characters of wisdom and contrivance in the frame of the inanimate world; as well as in the organical fabric of the bodies of animals. Now, from hence ariseth a new and invincible argument, that the present frame of the

[h] Vide Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. iii. [cap. i.—D.] [* any; 1st ed. "and."—D.]

[i] At pater Anchises penitus convalle virenti. Virg. Æn. vi. [679.—D.]
Et ibid. [676.—D.] Hoc superate jugum.
Et ibid. [754.—D.] Et tumulum capit.
[† these; 1st ed. "those."—D.]

[k] Flowers worthy of paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain.
Paradise Lost, lib. iv. [241.—D.]

[l] For earth hath this variety from heaven
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale. Ibid. lib. vi. [640.—D.]

world hath not existed from all eternity. For such an usefulness of things, or a fitness of means to ends, as neither proceeds from the necessity of their beings, nor can happen to them by chance, doth necessarily infer that there was an intelligent Being, which was the author and contriver of that usefulness. We have formerly demonstrated,[m] that the body of a man, which consists of an incomprehensible variety of parts, all admirably fitted to their peculiar functions and the conservation of the whole, could no more be formed fortuitously than the *Æneis* of Virgil, or any other long poem with good sense and just measures, could be composed by the casual combinations of letters. Now, to pursue this comparison; as it is utterly impossible to be believed, that such a poem may have been eternal, transcribed from copy to copy without any first author and original; so it is equally incredible and impossible, that the fabric of human bodies, which hath such excellent and divine artifice, and, if I may so say, such good sense, and true syntax, and harmonious measures in its constitution, should be propagated and transcribed from father to son without a first parent and creator of it. An eternal usefulness of things, an eternal good sense, cannot possibly be conceived without an eternal wisdom and understanding. But that can be no other than that eternal and omnipotent God, *that by wisdom hath founded the earth, and by understanding hath established the heavens*:[n] to whom be all honour, and glory, and praise, and adoration, from henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

[m] Serm. v. [n] Prov. iii.

FOUR LETTERS

FROM

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

TO

DOCTOR BENTLEY:

CONTAINING SOME ARGUMENTS IN PROOF OF A DEITY.

(*First printed*, 1756.)

LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

To the Reverend Dr. Richard Bentley, at the Bishop of Worcester's house, in Park-street, Westminster.

SIR,

WHEN I wrote my treatise about our system, I had an eye upon such principles as might work with considering men for the belief of a Deity; and nothing can rejoice me more than to find it useful for that purpose. But if I have done the public any service this way, it is due to nothing but industry and patient thought.

As to your first query, it seems to me that if the matter of our sun and planets, and all the matter of the universe, were evenly scattered throughout all the heavens, and every particle had an innate gravity towards all the rest, and the whole space throughout which this matter was scattered was but finite; the matter on the outside of this space would, by its gravity, tend towards all the matter on the inside, and, by consequence, fall down into the middle of the whole space, and there compose one great spherical mass. But if the matter was evenly disposed throughout an infinite space, it could never convene into one mass; but some of it would convene into one mass, and some into another, so as to make an infinite number of great masses, scattered at great distances from one to another throughout all that infinite space. And thus might the sun and fixed stars be formed, supposing the matter were of a lucid nature. But how the matter should

divide itself into two sorts, and that part of it which is fit to compose a shining body should fall down into one mass and make a sun, and the rest which is fit to compose an opaque body should coalesce, not into one great body, like the shining matter, but into many little ones; or if the sun at first were an opaque body like the planets, or the planets lucid bodies like the sun, how he alone should be changed into a shining body, whilst all they continue opaque, or all they be changed into opaque ones, whilst he remains unchanged; I do not think explicable by mere natural causes, but am forced to ascribe it to the counsel and contrivance of a voluntary Agent.

The same Power, whether natural or supernatural, which placed the sun in the centre of the six primary planets, placed Saturn in the centre of the orbs of his five secondary planets, and Jupiter in the centre of his four secondary planets, and the earth in the centre of the moon's orb; and therefore, had this cause been a blind one, without contrivance or design, the sun would have been a body of the same kind with Saturn, Jupiter, and the earth, that is, without light and heat. Why there is one body in our system qualified to give light and heat to all the rest, I know no reason, but because the Author of the system thought it convenient; and why there is but one body of this kind, I know no reason, but because one was sufficient to warm and enlighten all the rest. For the Cartesian hypothesis of suns losing their light, and then turning into comets, and comets into planets, can have no place in my system, and is plainly erroneous; because it is certain, that as often as they appear to us, they descend into the system of our planets, lower than the orb of Jupiter, and sometimes lower than the orbs of Venus and Mercury, and yet never stay here, but always return from the sun with the same degrees of motion by which they approached him.

To your second query, I answer, that the motions which the planets now have could not spring from any natural cause alone, but were impressed by an intelligent Agent. For since comets descend into the region of our planets, and here move all manner of ways, going sometimes the same way

with the planets, sometimes the contrary way, and sometimes in cross ways, in planes inclined to the plane of the ecliptic, and at all kinds of angles, 'tis plain that there is no natural cause which could determine all the planets, both primary and secondary, to move the same way and in the same plane, without any considerable variation: this must have been the effect of counsel. Nor is there any natural cause which could give the planets those just degrees of velocity, in proportion to their distances from the sun and other central bodies, which were requisite to make them move in such concentric orbs about those bodies. Had the planets been as swift as comets, in proportion to their distances from the sun, (as they would have been, had their motion been caused by their gravity, whereby the matter, at the first formation of the planets, might fall from the remotest regions towards the sun,) they would not move in concentric orbs, but in such eccentric ones as the comets move in. Were all the planets as swift as Mercury, or as slow as Saturn or his satellites; or were their several velocities otherwise much greater or less than they are, as they might have been, had they arose from any other cause than their gravities; or had the distances from the centres about which they move been greater or less than they are, with the same velocities; or had the quantity of matter in the sun, or in Saturn, Jupiter, and the earth, and, by consequence, their gravitating power, been greater or less than it is; the primary planets could not have revolved about the sun, nor the secondary ones about Saturn, Jupiter, and the earth, in concentric circles, as they do, but would have moved in hyperbolas, or parabolas, or in ellipses very eccentric. To make this system, therefore, with all its motions, required a cause which understood and compared together the quantities of matter in the several bodies of the sun and planets, and the gravitating powers resulting from thence; the several distances of the primary planets from the sun, and of the secondary ones from Saturn, Jupiter, and the earth; and the velocities with which these planets could revolve about those quantities of matter in the central bodies; and to compare

and adjust all these things together, in so great a variety of bodies, argues that cause to be, not blind and fortuitous, but very well skilled in mechanics and geometry....

To your third query, I answer, that it may be represented that the sun may, by heating those planets most which are nearest to him, cause them to be better concocted, and more condensed by that concoction. But, when I consider that our earth is much more heated in its bowels below the upper crust by subterraneous fermentations of mineral bodies than by the sun, I see not why the interior parts of Jupiter and Saturn might not be as much heated, concocted, and coagulated by those fermentations as our earth is; and therefore this various density should have some other cause than the various distances of the planets from the sun. And I am confirmed in this opinion by considering, that the planets of Jupiter and Saturn, as they are rarer than the rest, so they are vastly greater, and contain a far greater quantity of matter, and have many satellites about them; which qualifications surely arose not from their being placed at so great a distance from the sun, but were rather the cause why the Creator placed them at great distance. For, by their gravitating powers they disturb one another's motions very sensibly, as I find by some late observations of Mr. Flamsteed; and had they been placed much nearer to the sun and to one another, they would, by the same powers, have caused a considerable disturbance in the whole system.

To your fourth query, I answer, that, in the hypothesis of vortices, the inclination of the axis of the earth might, in my opinion, be ascribed to the situation of the earth's vortex before it was absorbed by the neighbouring vortices, and the earth turned from a sun to a comet; but this inclination ought to decrease constantly in compliance with the motion of the earth's vortex, whose axis is much less inclined to the ecliptic, as appears by the motion of the moon carried about therein. If the sun by his rays could carry about the planets, yet I do not see how he could thereby effect their diurnal motions.

Lastly, I see nothing extraordinary in the inclination of the earth's axis for proving a Deity, unless you will urge it as a contrivance for winter and summer, and for making the earth habitable towards the poles; and that the diurnal rotations of the sun and planets, as they could hardly arise from any cause purely mechanical, so by being determined all the same way with the annual and menstrual motions, they seem to make up that harmony in the system, which, as I explained above, was the effect of choice rather than chance.

There is yet another argument for a Deity, which I take to be a very strong one; but till the principles on which it is grounded are better received, I think it more advisable to let it sleep.

I am your most humble servant to command,

IS. NEWTON.

Cambridge, Decemb. 10, 1692.

LETTER II.

For Mr. Bentley, at the Palace at Worcester.

SIR,

I AGREE with you, that if matter evenly diffused through a finite space, not spherical, should fall into a solid mass, this mass would affect the figure of the whole space, provided it were not soft, like the old chaos, but so hard and solid from the beginning, that the weight of its protuberant parts could not make it yield to their pressure: yet, by earthquakes loosening the parts of this solid, the protuberances might sometimes sink a little by their weight, and thereby the mass might by degrees approach a spherical figure.

The reason why matter evenly scattered through a finite space would convene in the midst, you conceive the same with me; but that there should be a central particle, so accurately placed in the middle as to be always equally attracted on all sides, and thereby continue without motion, seems to

me a supposition fully as hard as to make the sharpest needle stand upright on its point upon a looking-glass. For if the very mathematical centre of the central particle be not accurately in the very mathematical centre of the attractive power of the whole mass, the particle will not be attracted equally on all sides. And much harder it is to suppose all the particles in an infinite space should be so accurately poised one among another, as to stand still in a perfect equilibrium. For I reckon this as hard as to make, not one needle only, but an infinite number of them (so many as there are particles in an infinite space) stand accurately poised upon their points. Yet I grant it possible, at least by a divine power; and if they were once to be placed, I agree with you that they would continue in that posture without motion for ever, unless put into new motion by the same power. When, therefore, I said that matter evenly spread through all space would convene by its gravity into one or more great masses, I understand it of matter not resting in an accurate poise.

But you argue, in the next paragraph of your letter, that every particle of matter in an infinite space has an infinite quantity of matter on all sides, and, by consequence, an infinite attraction every way, and therefore must rest in equilibrio, because all infinites are equal. Yet you suspect a paralogism in this argument; and I conceive the paralogism lies in the position, that all infinites are equal. The generality of mankind consider infinites no other ways than indefinitely; and in this sense they say all infinites are equal; though they would speak more truly if they should say, they are neither equal nor unequal, nor have any certain difference or proportion one to another. In this sense, therefore, no conclusions can be drawn from them about the equality, proportions, or differences of things; and they that attempt to do it usually fall into paralogisms. So, when men argue against the infinite divisibility of magnitude, by saying, that if an inch may be divided into an infinite number of parts, the sum of those parts will be an inch; and if a foot may be divided into an infinite number of parts, the sum of those parts

must be a foot; and therefore, since all infinites are equal, those sums must be equal, that is, an inch equal to a foot.

The falseness of the conclusion shews an error in the premises; and the error lies in the position, that all infinites are equal. There is, therefore, another way of considering infinites used by mathematicians, and that is, under certain definite restrictions and limitations, whereby infinites are determined to have certain differences or proportions to one another. Thus Dr. Wallis considers them in his *Arithmetica Infinitorum*, where, by the various proportions of infinite sums, he gathers the various proportions of infinite magnitudes: which way of arguing is generally allowed by mathematicians, and yet would not be good were all infinites equal. According to the same way of considering infinites, a mathematician would tell you, that though there be an infinite number of infinite little parts in an inch, yet there is twelve times that number of such parts in a foot; that is, the infinite number of those parts in a foot is not equal to, but twelve times bigger than the infinite number of them in an inch. And so a mathematician will tell you, that if a body stood in equilibrio between any two equal and contrary attracting infinite forces, and if to either of these forces you add any new finite attracting force, that new force, how little soever, will destroy their equilibrium, and put the body into the same motion into which it would put it were those two contrary equal forces but finite, or even none at all: so that in this case the two equal infinites, by the addition of a finite to either of them, become unequal in our ways of reckoning; and after these ways we must reckon, if from the considerations of infinites we would always draw true conclusions.

To the last part of your letter, I answer, first, that if the earth (without the moon) were placed any where with its centre in the *orbis magnus*, and stood still there without any gravitation or projection, and there at once were infused into it both a gravitating energy towards the sun, and a transverse impulse of a just quantity moving it directly in a tangent to the *orbis magnus*; the compounds of this attraction

and projection would, according to my notion, cause a circular revolution of the earth about the sun. But the transverse impulse must be a just quantity; for if it be too big or too little, it will cause the earth to move in some other line. Secondly, I do not know any power in nature which would cause this transverse motion without the divine arm. Blondel tells us somewhere in his book of Bombs, that Plato affirms, that the motion of the planets is such, as if they had all of them been created by God in some region very remote from our system, and let fall from thence towards the sun, and so soon as they arrived at their several orbs, their motion of falling turned aside into a transverse one. And this is true, supposing the gravitating power of the sun was double at that moment of time in which they all arrive at their several orbs; but then the divine power is here required in a double respect, namely, to turn the descending motions of the falling planets into a side motion, and, at the same time, to double the attractive power of the sun. So, then, gravity may put the planets into motion, but, without the divine power, it could never put them into such a circulating motion as they have about the sun; and therefore, for this, as well as other reasons, I am compelled to ascribe the frame of this system to an intelligent Agent.

You sometimes speak of gravity as essential and inherent to matter. Pray, do not ascribe that notion to me; for the cause of gravity is what I do not pretend to know, and therefore would take more time to consider of it.

I fear what I have said of infinites will seem obscure to you; but it is enough if you understand, that infinites, when considered absolutely without any restriction or limitation, are neither equal nor unequal, nor have any certain proportion one to another; and therefore the principle, that all infinites are equal, is a precarious one.

Sir, I am your most humble servant,

IS. NEWTON.

Trinity College, Jan. 17, 1692-3.

LETTER III.

For Mr. Bentley, at the Palace at Worcester.

SIR,

BECAUSE you desire speed, I will answer your letter with what brevity I can. In the six positions you lay down in the beginning of your letter, I agree with you. Your assuming the *orbis magnus* 7000 diameters of the earth wide, implies the sun's horizontal parallax to be half a minute. Flamsteed and Cassini have of late observed it to be about 10″, and thus the *orbis magnus* must be 21,000, or, in a rounder number, 20,000 diameters of the earth wide. Either computation, I think, will do well; and I think it not worth while to alter your numbers.

In the next part of your letter you lay down four other positions, founded upon the six first. The first of these four seems very evident, supposing you take attraction so generally as by it to understand any force by which distant bodies endeavour to come together without mechanical impulse. The second seems not so clear; for it may be said, that there might be other systems of worlds before the present ones, and others before those, and so on to all past eternity, and, by consequence, that gravity may be coeternal to matter, and have the same effect from all eternity as at present, unless you have somewhere proved that old systems cannot gradually pass into new ones; or that this system had not its original from the exhaling matter of former decaying systems, but from a chaos of matter evenly dispersed throughout all space; for something of this kind, I think you say, was the subject of your Sixth Sermon; and the growth of new systems out of old ones, without the mediation of a divine power, seems to me apparently absurd.

The last clause of the second position I like very well. It is inconceivable, that inanimate brute matter should, without the mediation of something else, which is not material, operate upon and affect other matter without mutual contact,

as it must be, if gravitation, in the sense of Epicurus, be essential and inherent in it. And this is one reason why I desired you would not ascribe innate gravity to me. That gravity should be innate, inherent, and essential to matter, so that one body may act upon another at a distance through a *vacuum*, without the mediation of any thing else, by and through which their action and force may be conveyed from one to another, is to me so great an absurdity, that I believe no man, who has in philosophical matters a competent faculty of thinking, can ever fall into it. Gravity must be caused by an agent acting constantly according to certain laws; but whether this agent be material or immaterial, I have left to the consideration of my readers.

Your fourth assertion, that the world could not be formed by innate gravity alone, you confirm by three arguments. But, in your first argument you seem to make a *petitio principii*; for whereas many ancient philosophers and others, as well theists as atheists, have all allowed that there may be worlds and parcels of matter innumerable or infinite, you deny this, by representing it as absurd as that there should be positively an infinite arithmetical sum or number, which is a contradiction *in terminis*; but you do not prove it as absurd. Neither do you prove, that what men mean by an infinite sum or number is a contradiction in nature; for a contradiction *in terminis* implies no more than an impropriety of speech. Those things which men understand by improper and contradictious phrases may be sometimes really in nature without any contradiction at all: a silver inkhorn, a paper lantern, an iron whetstone, are absurd phrases, yet the things signified thereby are really in nature. If any man should say, that a number and a sum, to speak properly, is that which may be numbered and summed, but things infinite are numberless, or, as we usually speak, innumerable and sumless, or insummable, and therefore ought not to be called a number or sum; he will speak properly enough, and your argument against him will, I fear, lose its force. And yet, if any man shall take the words number and sum in a larger

sense, so as to understand thereby things which, in the proper way of speaking, are numberless and sumless, (as you seem to do, when you allow an infinite number of points in a line) I could readily allow him the use of the contradictious phrases of innumerable number or sumless sum, without inferring from thence any absurdity in the thing he means by those phrases. However, if by this or any other argument you have proved the finiteness of the universe, it follows that all matter would fall down from the outsides, and convene in the middle. Yet the matter in falling might concrete into many round masses, like the bodies of the planets, and these, by attracting one another, might acquire an obliquity of descent, by means of which they might fall, not upon the great central body, but upon the side of it, and fetch a compass about, and then ascend again by the same steps and degrees of motion and velocity with which they descended before, much after the manner that the comets revolve about the sun; but a circular motion in concentric orbs about the sun they could never acquire by gravity alone.

And though all the matter were divided at first into several systems, and every system by a divine power constituted like ours, yet would the outside systems descend towards the middlemost; so that this frame of things could not always subsist without a divine power to conserve it; which is the second argument: and to your third I fully assent.

As for the passage of Plato, there is no common place from whence all the planets being let fall, and descending with uniform and equal gravities (as Galileo supposes), would, at their arrival to their several orbs, acquire their several velocities with which they now revolve in them. If we suppose the gravity of all the planets towards the sun to be of such a quantity as it really is, and that the motions of the planets are turned upwards, every planet will ascend to twice its height from the sun. Saturn will ascend till he be twice as high from the sun as he is at present, and no higher; Jupiter will ascend as high again as at present, that is, a little above the orb of Saturn; Mercury will ascend to twice his present

height, that is, to the orb of Venus; and so of the rest; and then by falling down again from the places to which they ascended, they will arrive again at their several orbs with the same velocities they had at first, and with which they now revolve.

But if, so soon as their motions by which they revolve are turned upwards, the gravitating power of the sun, by which their ascent is perpetually retarded, be diminished by one half, they will now ascend perpetually, and all of them at all equal distances from the sun will be equally swift. Mercury, when he arrives at the orb of Venus, will be as swift as Venus; and he and Venus, when they arrive at the orb of the earth, will be as swift as the earth; and so of the rest. If they begin all of them to ascend at once, and ascend in the same line, they will constantly, in ascending, become nearer and nearer together, and their motions will constantly approach to an equality, and become at length slower than any motion assignable. Suppose, therefore, that they ascended till they were almost contiguous, and their motions inconsiderably little, and that all their motions were at the same moment of time turned back again; or, which comes almost to the same thing, that they were only deprived of their motions and let fall at that time; they would all at once arrive at their several orbs, each with the velocity it had at first; and if their motions were then turned sideways, and, at the same time, the gravitating power of the sun doubled, that it might be strong enough to retain them in their orbs, they would revolve in them as before their ascent. But if the gravitating power of the sun was not doubled, they would go away from their orbs into the highest heavens in parabolical lines. These things follow from my *Princ. Math.* lib. i. prop. 33, 34, 36, 37.

I thank you very kindly for your designed present, and rest

Your most humble servant to command,

IS. NEWTON.

Cambridge, Feb. 25, 1692-3.

LETTER IV.

To Mr. Bentley, at the Palace at Worcester.

SIR,

THE hypothesis of deriving the frame of the world by mechanical principles from matter evenly spread through the heavens, being inconsistent with my system, I had considered it very little before your letters put me upon it; and therefore trouble you with a line or two more about it, if this comes not too late for your use.

In my former I represented that the diurnal rotations of the planets could not be derived from gravity, but required a divine arm to impress them. And though gravity might give the planets a motion of descent towards the sun, either directly or with some little obliquity, yet the transverse motions by which they revolve in their several orbs required the divine arm to impress them according to the tangents of their orbs. I would now add, that the hypothesis of matter's being at first evenly spread through the heavens, is, in my opinion, inconsistent with the hypothesis of innate gravity, without a supernatural power to reconcile them; and therefore it infers a Deity. For if there be innate gravity, it is impossible now for the matter of the earth and all the planets and stars to fly up from them, and become evenly spread throughout all the heavens, without a supernatural power; and certainly that which can never be hereafter without a supernatural power, could never be heretofore without the same power.

You queried, whether matter evenly spread throughout a finite space, of some other figure than spherical, would not, in falling down towards a central body, cause that body to be of the same figure with the whole space; and I answered, yes. But in my answer it is to be supposed that the matter descends directly downwards to that body, and that that body has no diurnal rotation.

This, sir, is all I would add to my former letters.

I am your most humble servant,

IS. NEWTON.

Cambridge, Feb. 11, 1693.

SERMONS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

(*From ed.* 1735.)

OF REVELATION AND THE MESSIAS:

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT THE PUBLIC COMMENCEMENT AT CAMBRIDGE,

July 5th, 1696.

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1 PET. iii. 15.

Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.

BY the *hope that is in us*, we do understand here, as in other places of Scripture, not only the bare hope strictly so called, but the faith too of a Christian. Whence it is that in the Syriac version of the text, and in some ancient Latin copies, the word *faith* is added to the other; *the hope and the faith that is in you.* And indeed, if we consider hope as a natural passion, we shall find it to be always attended and ushered in by faith. For, 'tis certain there is no hope without some antecedent belief that the thing hoped for may come to pass; and the strength and steadiness of our hope is ever proportional to the measure of our faith. It appears, therefore, why the word *hope* in the text may, with sufficient propriety of speech, comprehend the whole faith of a Christian; and that, when the apostle exhorts us *to be ready always to answer every man that asks the reason of our hope,* 'tis the same as if he enjoined us to be never unprepared nor unwilling to reply to any doubts or questions about the grounds of the Christian faith.

At the date of this epistle the whole world (with relation

to the text) might be considered under one general division, Jews and Gentiles. First, the Jews, *to whom the oracles of God were committed,*[a] and who from thence had the information and expectation of the Messias. These, when they asked a Christian the reason of his hope, were themselves already persuaded that the Messias would come; and the only controversy between them was, Whether Jesus was he? according to the message of John the Baptist, *Was Jesus he that should come, or must they look for another?*[b] Secondly, the Gentiles, who having no means of knowledge besides mere natural reason, could have no notions nor notices of this expected Messias: these, therefore, when they demanded the reason of a Christian's hope, were first to be acquainted with the purpose and promise of God to send the Messias; were to be instructed about the reasons and designs of that great embassy; about his quality and office, and all the circumstances of his person: and then was the proper time to shew that Jesus was he; that the description of the Messias was truly exhibited and represented in his character, and the ancient prophecies all accomplished in his actions and events.

'Tis not for nothing that the apostle so presseth this advice in the text, *Be ready* always *to give a reason of the hope that is in you:* as if he had foretold, that there would be no age of the Christian world wherein this preparation would be superfluous. It hath pleased the divine wisdom never yet to leave Christianity wholly at leisure from opposers; but to give its professors that perpetual exercise of their industry and zeal. And who can tell, if, without such adversaries to rouse and quicken them, they might not in long tract of time have grown remiss in the duties, and ignorant in the doctrines of religion? Perhaps before this time even some of the records of it might have perished by men's negligence; as the Jews had like to have lost their Law, if divine Providence had not preserved one copy of it in the Temple. It is *while men sleep,*[c] while they live in peace and security, and have no enemies to contest with, that the great *enemy comes and sows tares among*

[a] Rom. iii. 2. [b] Luke, vii. 19. [c] Matth. xiii. 25.

the wheat. But, of all the ages since the coming of Christ, I suppose this present has least reason to complain for want of work and employment in defence of religion. Here are not only the two parties in the text, Jews and Gentiles, still in the world to engage with; but even in the midst of Christianity are the most dangerous designs formed against it; as if our Saviour's prediction of particular families were to be verified too of the whole Church, *that its worst enemies should be they of its own household.*[d]

There are a sort of persons baptised indeed into the Christian faith, and educated in the profession of it; but in secret, I wish I might say so, nay, even openly, they oppose and blaspheme it, repudiating at once the whole authority of revelation, and debasing the sacred volumes to the rank of ordinary books of history and ethics. The being of God and a providence they profess to believe; to acknowledge a difference between good and evil; to be verily persuaded of another life to come; and to have their expectations of that state as their behaviour is in this. Nay, even the whole system of Christian morals they can willingly embrace; but not as a collection of divine statutes and ordinances sent us by an express from heaven, but only as useful rules of life, discoverable by plain reason, and agreeable to natural religion. So that they cannot see the mighty occasion that should invite even the eternal Son of God from the bosom of the Father to act so mean and calamitous a part upon the stage of this sorry world. What need of so great a master to read mankind lectures of morals, which they might easily learn without any teacher? 'Tis true, they are often told of some sublime mysterious doctrines delivered by him, which they own would ne'er have been thought of by natural reason. But then, that is so far from recommending to them the importance of his errand from heaven, that for that very reason they deny the truth of his message. For whatever comes imperiously in the name of divine mystery, and soars above the pitch of human knowledge; whatsoever things they cannot fathom

[d] Matth. x. 36.

and grasp through all the causes, designs, modes, and relations of them, as the notion of the Messias, his incarnation, mediation, satisfaction; all these they reject and explode, as incomprehensible to pure reason, which they set up as the only principle and measure of belief.

In all this, these persons act the part and place themselves in the condition of Gentiles, whom we may imagine, in the text, *to ask the reason of a Christian's hope;* since the whole body of these men's religion is no more than what even heathens attained to; the modern Deism being the very same with old philosophical Paganism, only aggravated and damned with the additional crime of apostasy from the faith. But, besides this, these very persons will, on other occasions, personate the Jews too, those other inquirers supposed in the text, and dispute with Jewish objections against the Christian religion; though they no more believe the matter of those objections than the thing they object against; like Celsus and Julian of old, that gathered arguments against the Christians from all the different sects and hypotheses of philosophy, though inconsistent one argument with another; and brought objections too from the Old Testament, which they did not believe, against the New one, which they were engaged by all methods to oppose.

In our present discourse, therefore, we shall endeavour to refute these modern adversaries under their double shape and character: First, as they are mere Deists or Pagans, renouncing all revelation, and the very notion of the Messias: and, secondly, as they fight under Jewish colours; so as, admitting there be a promised Messias, the Saviour of the world, yet men ought to reject the person of Jesus, and still to wait for another.

I. And, first, we shall consider them in the quality of Deists and disciples of mere natural reason. We profess ourselves as much concerned, and as truly as themselves are, for the use and authority of reason in controversies of faith. We look upon right reason as the native lamp of the soul, placed and kindled there by our Creator, to conduct us in the whole

course of our judgments and actions. True reason, like its divine Author, never is itself deceived, nor ever deceives any man. Even revelation itself is not shy nor unwilling to ascribe its own first credit and fundamental authority to the test and testimony of reason. Sound reason is the touchstone to distinguish that pure and genuine gold from baser metals, revelation truly divine from imposture and enthusiasm: so that the Christian religion is so far from declining or fearing the strictest trials of reason, that it every where appeals to it, is defended and supported by it, and indeed cannot continue, in the apostle's description, *pure and undefiled*[e] without it. 'Tis the benefit of reason alone, under the providence and Spirit of God, that we ourselves are at this day a reformed orthodox church; that we departed from the errors of popery, and that we knew too where to stop, neither running into the extravagancies of fanaticism, nor sliding into the indifferency of libertinism. Whatsoever, therefore, is inconsistent with natural reason, can never be justly imposed as an article of faith. That the same body is in many places at once, that plain bread is not bread; such things, though they be said with never so much pomp and claim to infallibility, we have still greater authority to reject them, as being contrary to common sense and our natural faculties; as subverting the foundations of all faith, even the grounds of their own credit, and all the principles of civil life.

So far are we from contending with our adversaries about the dignity and authority of reason; but then we differ with them about the exercise of it, and the extent of its province. For the Deists there stop, and set bounds to their faith, where reason, their only guide, does not lead the way further, and walk along before them. We, on the contrary, as Moses was shewn by divine power a true sight of the promised land, though himself could not pass over to it;[f] so we think reason may receive from revelation some further discoveries and new prospects of things, and be fully convinced of the reality of them, though itself cannot pass on, nor travel those regions,

[e] James, i. 27. [f] Deut. xxxiv.

cannot penetrate the fund of those truths, nor advance to the utmost bounds of them. For there is certainly a wide difference between what is contrary to reason, and what is superior to it and out of its reach. To give an instance in created nature: how many things are there whose being we cannot doubt of, though unable to comprehend the manner of their being so? That the human soul is vitally united to the body by a reciprocal commerce of action and passion, this we all consciously feel and know, and our adversaries will affirm it; let them tell us, then, what is the chain, the cement, the magnetism, what they will call it, the invisible tie of that union, whereby matter and an incorporeal mind, things that have no similitude nor alliance to each other, can so sympathise by a mutual league of motion and sensation? No, they will not pretend to that; for they can frame no conceptions of it. They are sure there is such an union, from the operations and effects, but the cause and the manner of it are too subtle and secret to be discovered by the eye of reason; 'tis mystery, 'tis divine magic, 'tis natural miracle. If, then, in created beings they are content with us to confess their ignorance of the modes of existence, without doubting of things themselves; have not we much more reason to be humble and modest in speculations about the essence of God, about the reasons of his counsels, and the ways of his actions? Yes, certainly; under those circumstances we may believe with reason even things above and beyond reason.

For example: If we have sure ground to believe that such a book is the revelation of God; and we find in it propositions expressed in plain words, of a determinate sense without ambiguity, so as they cannot be otherwise interpreted, by any just metaphor or fair construction allowed in common language; we say we have sufficient reason to assent to those propositions, as divine doctrines and infallible truths, so far as they are declared there, though perhaps we cannot ourselves comprehend, nor demonstrate to others, the reasons and the manner of them. Neither is this an easy credulity, or unworthy of the most cautious and morose searcher of

truth. For, observe, we do not say, any thing incomprehensible to reason is, separate and alone, a proper object of belief; but as it is supported and established by some other known and comprehensible truth: as, if Abraham had been told by some ordinary man, that in his and Sarah's decrepit age he should be blessed with a son; this promise, so alone, without its basis to stand on, could not have challenged his assent, because the thing was impossible in the way of nature; but since it was God Almighty, *with whom all things are possible*,[e] that was the author of that promise, by the mediation of that certain truth, the veracity and omnipotence of God, without hesitation he believed, and so obtained the glory to be *father of the faithful*.[f] And upon the same grounds the blessed Virgin gave credit to the salutation of the angel, though the message in itself seemed impossible to reason. So true it is, that reason itself warrants us to proceed and advance by faith even beyond the sphere and regions of reason. We agree, then, with our adversaries about the authority of reason; but we dissent about the exercise of it, and the bounds of its jurisdiction. We believe even the abstrusest mysteries of the Christian religion; of which mysteries, perhaps, we can assign no reasons; but for our belief we assign a good one, because they are plainly taught in the word of God, who can neither err nor deceive. And this we affirm to be a reasonable conclusion, though it carry us even to the confines of heaven, beyond the limits of reason. But, if the Deists think to oblige us to give a natural account of those mysteries, without the authority of Scripture, for that we must beg their excuse. We will argue from strict reason, as much as they can pretend to; but we must not submit that our adversaries shall confine us to improper topics and impossible ways of proof.

It appears, therefore, that though we should decline and despair to give any account at all of the reasons and methods of God's counsel in the mission of his Son, and only appeal to the sentence of Scripture, yet the Deists ought to be satis-

[e] Matt. xix. 26. [f] Rom. iv. 11.

fied with that proof, since the doctrine is so expressly taught in the oracles of God. But, besides this, what if even natural light shall discover to us some faint, but yet certain views of that mysterious instance of divine wisdom and goodness, and exhibit to us a rational account why the Son of God should condescend to be our Mediator and Redeemer? But, before we engage in this attempt, let it be lawful to implore the candour of our friends; if, while we endeavour to win over our enemies, we may seem to some to do too little; or, perhaps, to others, to venture too far, and to advance beyond our lines. To discern, then, some reason* of this wonderful mystery, we must take our prospect from the highest mountain of nature, from the first creation and origin of human race.

God, who at the beginning viewed all the works of his hands, and *behold, all things were very good,*[g] made man also upright and complete, without any defect in his whole composition; without any original perverseness of soul, or false bias of will or judgment; without any natural obliquity or enormity of inclinations. He made him an intelligent being, to know God and himself; to understand and feel present happiness, and to secure it by consideration and contrivance for the future. He endowed him with liberty of mind, that he might act, not of necessity, nor blind instinct, like the brutes, but with consciousness and voluntary choice. He implanted in him diverse appetites and affections, all useful instruments of his happiness, if fitly employed; and none vicious and culpable radically, and in their whole nature, but then only, when they are applied to wrong objects, or in right ones are raised or sunk beside their due temper and measure. I say it again, for the justification of our Creator, that not one of the simple affections of the soul, no, not concupiscence, hatred, anger, revenge, are in themselves criminal and sinful. Some of the affections, 'tis true, have very bad names; but those are either mere excesses of simple passions, or else mixed and compound ones, which have no proper real

[* reason; 1*st ed.* "reasons."—D.]

[g] Gen. i. 31.

essence, but are only notional terms; as *envy*, for example, a very bad thing indeed, but 'tis an evil of our own product, and not of God's creating. For the real constituent parts of it are hatred and grief, very useful and lawful affections; but the evil of it is our own, when we entertain that hatred and grief at the good that befals others; which is what we express by the complex name of envy.

God, therefore, having so created man, in every capacity pure and perfect, might justly require of him that he should maintain and preserve this original rectitude; that in all his desires, designs, and actions, he should constantly adhere to the dictates of reason and nature; so as the least deviation would make him obnoxious to God's displeasure, and nothing less than complete obedience recommend him to his favour; according to the terms proposed to Cain, *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou dost not well, sin lies at the door.*[h] God, I say, might expect and require of man such a perfect obedience to the law of nature, because it was both reasonable and possible for man to perform it. *Reasonable* it was, because every statute of that law promotes the true interest and felicity of mankind even in the very performance. 'Tis true, in the present posture of human affairs, a man's duty is frequently inconsistent with his temporal interest. *But from the beginning it was not so;* neither would it be now, if the whole world at once could be just and innocent. For 'tis not my keeping the law, but another's transgressing it, that involves me in any misery. The scope and tendency of the law itself is always mine and every man's advantage. For 'tis not a thing foreign and alien to our nature, imposed on us purely to try our obedience; but it all results from our very frame and constitution. The general preservation of man's natural good is the sole root and fountain of the moral: the universal profit and pleasure, the public happiness of human life, gives being and denomination to every virtue and vice; and the true rules and directions to preserve and secure that happiness make up the whole volume, the code and pan-

[h] Gen. iv. 7.

dect of the law of nature. Without doubt, then, it was reasonable to obey, where nothing was commanded us but to pursue our own interest; nothing forbidden us but not to do ourselves harm. And, secondly, it was *possible* for man to perform that entire obedience. For since, as we have proved before, all his natural faculties are right and good, and the law itself accommodated and proportioned to those faculties, there appears no necessary intrinsic impediment why he may not adequately observe it. If every particular precept be possible to be done, 'tis not absolutely impossible to fulfil the universal. And, methinks, they that, on other accounts, acknowledge that God requires such perfect obedience upon the terms of the law of nature, should be very averse from believing that there is a natural and fundamental insufficiency in man to perform it. For certainly the just God cannot be so importune and unreasonable a master as to enjoin us what is physically impossible; *to expect to reap where he has not sown, to require bricks without allowance of straw.*

But then, though there was no such original and natural disability in man, yet there arose a moral and circumstantial one; an accidental incapacity supervening to his nature, an impossibility from event, that ever any person from the beginning of the world to the last period of it (always excepting the *man Christ Jesus*) should be wholly pure and free from the contagion of sin. For, our first parents having fallen from their native state of innocence, the tincture of evil, like an hereditary disease, infected all their posterity: and the leaven of sin having once corrupted the whole mass of mankind, all the species ever after would be soured and tainted with it, the vicious ferment perpetually diffusing and propagating itself through all generations. For, let us but consider the state of human life; first, a perpetual conversation among evil examples, and the strongest principle of our nature, imitation; and then, the ignorance and prejudices of childhood, the fervour and temerity of youth, the force and the frequency of temptations, and the narrow dubious confines between virtue and vice; and we may pronounce it im-

possible that any man should so govern his steps through all the lubricous paths of life, as never once to slip and fall from his duty. Agreeably to the testimony of Scripture, *which hath concluded all under sin,* Gal. iii. 22.; and again, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;*[i] and again, *Both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin; all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*[k] *Every mouth then be stopped; and all the world* must plead *guilty* before the tribunal of God; *for by the deeds of the law* (the law of nature, as well as of Moses) *no flesh can be justified in his sight.*[l] It is evident, then, from the principles of pure reason, beside the authority of Scripture, that upon the Deist's hypothesis, upon the terms of natural religion, no salvation can be obtained; no life and immortality can be expected; for, that being the free offer and favour of God, he might justly set what price he pleased upon it, even the greatest that we can possibly pay; nothing less than entire obedience, than unspotted innocence, than consummate virtue.

Thus far, then, even reason evinceth, and holds the lamp to revelation. Some means of reconciliation between God and man, the judge and the offender, must be contrived; some vicarious satisfaction to justice, and model of a new covenant; or else the whole bulk of mankind are for ever unhappy. And surely to prevent that, to retrieve a perishing world, was a weighty concern; even of greater importance than the very creating it, and more worthy of the care and consult of Heaven. I say, the care of Heaven; for, alas! here on earth what expedient could man find out? *How could dust and ashes take upon him to speak unto the Lord?* Could any of the sons of Adam presume to be advocate for the rest, himself one of the criminals, himself in want of another advocate? And what friend knew we at the court of heaven, of that high power and favour with God as to offer his intercession? or so wonderfully kind to us as to pay our satisfaction? We must freely own to the Deist, that here reason was at a stand; even nature herself languished between hope and despair;

[i] 1 John, i. 8. [k] Rom. iii. 9, 23. [l] Rom. iii. 19.

and, in the style of the apostle, *the whole creation groaned and travailed in pain together*;[m] when behold, (what revelation hath informed and assured us of,) the eternal Son of the Almighty, *the brightness of the paternal glory, and the express image of his substance*,[n] even he vouchsafed to be our patron and mediator; to take our nature upon him, and to dwell among men; to fulfil that law of righteousness wherein we were deficient; to bear our guilt and our burden upon himself, and to offer his most precious blood as an expiation for our offences, as the seal of a new covenant, better than the law of nature; a covenant of more gracious terms, terms of repentance and remission of sins; so that if we truly believe in him, and sincerely endeavour to observe his commands, our imperfect righteousness, through the merits of his sufferings, shall be imputed, accepted, and rewarded, as if it were an entire obedience to the strict law of works and of natural perfection.

And now I dare presume to ask even our adversaries themselves, what flaws or fallacies they can shew in all this. If it be true, then, that reason itself discovers such absolute necessity of some way of reconciliation between God and man; and if it was necessary for man, as being the party concerned, to know the particular way that God did approve and accept of; and if mere reason could never find that out, but revelation alone must and ought to inform us; and, lastly, if such revelation be actually made, attested, and promulgated to the world; what pretence is there left, why we should not believe and acquiesce in it? if, upon examination, it bear all the marks of true revelation, if it contain nothing unworthy of itself, and of the wisdom and goodness of its Author.

And is not the economy of man's salvation, as it is set forth in holy Scriptures, every way agreeable to that divine character? No, if we ask our adversaries, 'tis an improper and unequal method; 'tis inconsistent with the justice and impartiality of God. *Rex Jupiter omnibus idem.** God, say they, if he had designed such an universal benefit for man-

[m] Rom. viii. 22. [n] Heb. i. 3. [* Virg. Æn. x. 112.—D.]

kind, would have exhibited it equally and indifferently to every age and nation alike: but the conditions of salvation proposed in the Gospel are incompetent and much too narrow, being restrained to those times and countries alone that can hear of the fame of Jesus, and believe in his person. And what becomes, then, of all the former ages of men, before he was born? what of those remote nations ever since, that could have no intelligence of him, nor hear the least tidings of Judea and Jerusalem? Must all those myriads of souls perish for invincible ignorance, for want of impossible faith? *For how could they believe on him of whom they had not heard? and how could they hear without a preacher?*[o] And why should *the God of the whole earth, the God that is no respecter of persons,* no, nor of nations, be so unaccountably kind, so unjustly fond and partial, to any single country, much less to a little obscure people, the Jews, scarce heard of in the rest of the world till they were captives and slaves in it; and withdraw his paternal love from so many other nations, much more considerable, and more worthy of his providence? *Is he God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles?*[p]

This way of discourse we may expect from the Deists; and I hope, according to the advice of the text, we are both *able and ready to give a reply.* For, first, as to that imagined partiality of God, in preferring any one country before the rest of the world to be the land of Christ's nativity; what a poor and contemptible cavil! for, upon supposition that the Messias of God was to take human nature upon him, and be born of a woman, must he not of necessity be born in some one particular country, exclusively to all the rest? And is not that, then, a ridiculous objection against any single country, that may equally be urged against all whatsoever?

Neither was it mere fondness in the Deity, that he chose the obscure land of Palestine for the birthplace of his Son, rather than Greece, or Italy, or Asia, the theatres of art and learning, and the seats of empire: for, not to mention Abraham and the patriarchs, whose singular faith and piety justly

[o] Rom. x. 14. [p] Rom. iii. 29.

obtained of God that their posterity should have the *adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the promises, and the consanguinity of Christ*;[q] it appears also from event, that the circumstances of that nation were of all others the most suitable to the design of the Messias. For, since it was fit and necessary that prophecies should foretel of him long before his coming; that his pedigree and extraction should be accurately deduced through a long series of ancestors, and other such marks be assigned of him, that men might know this was he; what more proper to those purposes than the state of the Jews, that *peculiar people*, secluded and distinguished one tribe from another, and the whole from all the rest of mankind, by the very frame of their polity? so that the genealogies were less confused, the histories and prophecies more faithfully recorded, and the accomplishment of all more certain and illustrious, than they could have been in any other nation upon earth; all of which, within that long compass of time, were blended together by mutual commerce and mutual conquest, and other omnifarious causes of mixture and confusion.

And then, as to that other surmise, that God would have proposed fair and equal means of general salvation, and not upon such narrow and insufficient terms as an actual faith in the person of Jesus, a condition impossible to the much greater part of mankind; we acknowledge it to be true, infallibly true; faith in Christ Jesus, the only way to salvation since the preaching of the Gospel; so as whosoever rejects that, when it is duly declared to him, and refuses his assent and obedience to it, can have no portion in the kingdom of heaven. But, for those that never once heard of the Lord of life, that's an undecided case, which we do not determine. For who has authority to give sentence, where God and Scripture are silent? Thus far we are assured there, that let the future condition of those be as God pleases, at least he will not condemn them for invincible ignorance: *for there is no respect of persons with him; but as many as have sinned without*

[q] Rom. ix. 4.

law shall perish without law.[r] The meaning whereof is, that the Gentile world shall not be judged and condemned for the breach of the law of Moses, which never was given them; but for sins against the law of nature, and the common light of conscience. We may infer, then, by parity of argument, that as *many as shall sin without the Gospel shall perish without the Gospel;* that is, not because they believed not in Jesus, whom they had not the least notice of; but they will be tried and sentenced for sins against natural reason, for things within their power and capacity; *because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God; because they held the truth in unrighteousness, so that they are without excuse.*[s]

But if the Deist shall still insist, that, though we have justified God from the calumny, as if he would condemn the Gentiles for want of impossible faith, yet still he maintains it to be unjust and incredible, that while one small part of mankind enjoys the favour of the Gospel, all under the state of nature shall have the hard measure of *summum jus,* must be all damned by rigid inflexible justice, without equity or mercy, without any act of pardon, or the least room for repentance: if he will rather obstinately believe, or hope, or wish, that *the God of tender compassions, who loveth all things that he hath made, who will not require much where little has been given, cannot be so extreme* with the Gentile world *as to mark all that is done amiss,* and yet to slight and overlook those shining examples of virtue not unfrequent among them: if this be all he sticks at, God forbid that on this single account he should exclude himself from the communion of faith. We can allow him this opinion, as at worst a charitable error; as some indication of a large heart, and a generous love of mankind. But then he must always remember, that even those virtuous heathens, whom he would so gladly place in some part of heaven, can be saved on no other account than by the merits and mediation of Jesus their Saviour. For without his satisfaction there is no remission of sins nor accepta-

[r] Rom. ii. 11, 12. [s] Rom. i. 18, 20, 21.

tion of repentance; and without remission of sins, *by the deeds of the law* and natural righteousness *no flesh can be justified in the sight of God.*[t] They are saved, therefore, if they be saved at all, by the sole benefit of Christ, though in this life they could not know nor thank their benefactor. For though they lived in the earliest ages of time, long before his incarnation, yet even then they might be *purified by the blood of the Lamb, manifested indeed in latter times, but pre-ordained before the foundation of the world:*[u] so that from the first origin of it he might extend and impart, to all that were worthy, the efficacy of his merits, and the privileges of faith and grace, and a share in the inheritance of glory and immortality.

II. And now we may expect that our adversaries will put off the garb and character of Deists, and make a new attempt for the fortune of the day, under the arms and conduct of the Jews.

It must be granted on all hands, that the Messias, whensoever he is manifested to the world, must appear in that very manner as the Jewish prophets describe him. All the characters must hit and correspond one to another; the same features, the same lineaments visible in both; the one the shadow and picture, and the other the substance. Now, say they, it is evident from the prophets, that the Messias is to be a temporal prince, to sit on the throne of David his royal ancestor, and to make Jerusalem the seat of an universal and perpetual empire. But the character of Jesus is as different from this description as a stable from a palace. 'Tis true, we Christians endeavour to shew a similitude between them by figurative interpretations of Scripture, which we call the spiritual and mystical sense; but they call arbitrary and precarious, as having no foundation in the native and naked letter, which is not to be racked and wrested from its obvious meaning, little credit being to be given to such extorted confessions.

[t] Rom. iii. 20. [u] 1 Pet. i. 20.

Thus far our objectors. But I suppose the prophetic language and character is better understood than that this surmise should pass without a just answer. Indeed, if it were in this case alone that the expressions of the prophets need a figurative interpretation, the exception might appear fair and plausible: but it cannot be denied, that on many other occasions, besides the matter of the Messias, their discourse (after the genius of the eastern nations) is thick set with metaphor and allegory: the same bold comparisons and dithyrambic liberty of style every where occur. Which is an easy and natural account (besides the more secret reasons that the Holy Spirit might have) why the kingdom of the Messias,* though really spiritual and not of this world, is so often dressed and painted by them with the glories of secular empire. For when *the Spirit of God came upon them,* and breathed a new warmth and vigour through all the powers of the body† and soul; when by the influx of divine light the whole scene of Christ's heavenly kingdom was represented to their view, so that their hearts were ravished with joy, and their imaginations turgid and pregnant with the glorious ideas; then surely, if ever, their style would be strong and lofty, full of allusions to all that is great and magnificent in the kingdoms of this world. But then, in other passages of the same prophets, as it were on purpose to hint to us the true meaning of the former, the Messias is described plainly, without poetical colours, *to be a person of low condition; to have no form nor comeliness in him; a man acquainted with sorrows, and numbered among transgressors;* and by other characters so clear and express, that some of the Jewish rabbies, to elude so strong a conviction, have maintained and propagated an absurd opinion, as if two Messiahs were foretold by the prophets; the one a triumphant monarch, the‡ other an unfortunate and afflicted person. What will not

[* of the Messias; 1*st ed.* "of Messias."—D.]
[† of the body; 1*st ed.* "of body."—D.]
[‡ the; 1*st ed.* "and the."—D.]

perverse and refractory minds take hold of, rather than submit to an unwelcome truth?

It is evident, then, that the kingdom of Christ, so magnified in the prophetic style, is a spiritual kingdom. And yet, to be free and ingenuous, we must own that the whole nation of the Jews mistook the meaning of those passages. Even our Saviour's own disciples were not exempted from the common error. And the whole posterity of that people are pertinacious in it to this day; which to many is a mighty prejudice against the credit of the Gospel. What! as if it were such a matter of astonishment, that they obstinately adhere to the literal sense, which promises them a temporal kingdom, with worldly honours and pleasures! an interpretation both specious in itself, and agreeable to their proud hopes and carnal apprehensions, which are miserably defeated and disappointed in Jesus. There seems to be nothing so very unnatural and unaccountable in this. But then that very disappointment, so far is it* from being an objection, that, to a sagacious mind and uncorrupt judgment, itself is a convincing proof that he was truly the Messias. For let us reflect upon the state of those times. 'Tis certain, in fact, that the whole nation was possessed with an inveterate persuasion that the Messias was then a-coming; and 'tis as certain, that Jesus the son of Mary professed himself that Messias. Let us argue now upon human reasons, and the common principles of action. If he was not the true Messias, we are then to consider him as an ordinary Jew, of mean quality and education. Now, to give any tolerable account why such a one should pretend himself to be the Messias, there are but two ways possible: either he was acted by ambitious designs, which he hoped to compass by that imposture; or by a complexional and natural enthusiasm, verily imagining himself to be the Messias. I suppose I scarce need to say, that both these suppositions are fully confuted by every word and action of his life. But what I now observe is this, that upon either of those principles,

[* is it; 1*st ed.* "it is."—D.]

whether ambition or enthusiasm, he would certainly have acted the part of the Messias in such a character as men then ascribed to him; according to the popular expectation, and the received notion of those times. Now the whole nation expected that the Messias was to be a great general, to rescue them from the Roman power, and *to restore the kingdom to Israel.* 'Tis certain, then, that upon either of these two motives* he would have blown the trumpet to rebellion, and attempted their deliverance. Ambition would have animated him to it, as the only way to his hopes and wishes. Or, if enthusiasm had inspired him, what would he not have promised and assumed to himself? *To fight the battles of the Lord; to execute vengeance upon the heathen; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron.* Such were the designs of Barcocab and some other impostors of old: setting up to be the Messias, they put their followers in arms, and proclaimed liberty to the people. Not so the blessed Jesus: but, when the multitude would have made him their king, he withdrew himself even by miracle to avoid it. He did not summon to arms, but to repentance and newness of life. He had a kingdom indeed; *but not of this earthly Jerusalem,* but *of that which is above.* He was truly their deliverer; *but* not from the Roman yoke, *but* from the more slavish yoke of the law, from the more wretched bondage to sin and death. Was this the air and language of ambition? Was this the mien and spirit of enthusiasm? Nay rather, does not nature herself cry out and declare, that for one of his low condition and vulgar education to profess himself the Messias in so surprising a manner, in a character so unthought of, by an interpretation of prophecies so spiritual and divine, so infinitely better than the literal meaning, against the universal prejudice of the nation, and the hopes and solicitations of his very followers, was certainly a thing more than human; an invincible testimony that he was really the Christ, and *his doctrine from God, and not of men.*

[* these two motives; 1*st ed.* "those motives."—D.]

But our adversaries have another objection still behind; and our answer thereto will put an end both to it and to the present discourse. And this objection is borrowed from the law of Moses; which, say they, having a promise of eternity annexed to it, to be *an everlasting covenant, a perpetual statute, a covenant of an everlasting priesthood,* ought of necessity to be continued and confirmed by the true Messias: whereas Jesus endeavoured to abolish it, and thereby wholly subverted the credit of his own pretensions. But we answer in our Saviour's declaration, *that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.*[v] We are to distinguish, then, between the moral part of the Mosaic law, and the political and ceremonial. As to the rites and ceremonies, 'tis apparent they had no intrinsic nor moral holiness in them, no natural tendency to promote the happiness of men; nay rather, they were inconvenient and grievous, *a yoke of bondage and servile discipline, which none were able to bear.* Even the rewards and penalties, which enforced their observation, did not naturally flow and result from them, as effects from proper causes; but they were miraculously added to them by the sole virtue of the divine promise. 'Tis true, they were fit and proper for the ends of their institution; to be types and shadows of better things to come; to preserve the people from idolatry, by allowing no intercourse nor commerce with other nations. But 'tis evident, for that very reason, as well as many more, that those ceremonies were neither calculated for eternity, nor modelled for mankind in common: so that when the reasons of their sanction no longer continued; when the things they typically represented were come to pass; when *the wall of partition was to be removed,* and, according to the prophecies, *all nations to be called to Christ, and the ends of the earth to be his possession;* they must needs be antiquated and abolished, like scaffolds that are removed when the buildings are finished; since under that new state none of them had any further use, and several of them became impossible to be observed. And so for the

[v] Matth. v. 17.

political institutions of Moses, 'tis plain they were accommodated to the circumstances of affairs, and the necessities of time and place; not absolutely the very best, but the best that those ages of the world and the genius of that people would bear. As, for instance, the toleration of polygamy and causeless divorces; these were indulged them, not as most pleasing to their lawgiver, but *because of the hardness of their hearts*,[w] in the words of our Saviour; because they were too stiff-necked and headstrong to admit of a shorter bridle. These civil ordinances, therefore, when better precepts were once proposed and accepted in their place, must of necessity drop and die of themselves, and become obsolete without any repeal: just as the temporary edicts in war, and the agreements of the cartel, do expire of their own accord when the peace is concluded. But then the moral part of the law of Moses, which is the sap and marrow, the soul and substance of the whole, that indeed is of eternal and universal obligation. But then who can say that this is abrogated and cancelled by Jesus? So far from that, that every branch of it is ingrafted and incorporated into his Gospel. In this best of senses, therefore, the Mosaic law is confirmed and fulfilled by our Saviour. For morality is a thing immutable; and, unless human nature itself should be new-moulded by our Maker, vice and virtue must be always what they have been. So foolish was the cavil of the Deists against our Saviour's descent from heaven, because he gave no other lectures of morals than what nature and reason had taught before. Nay, if he had taught us the reverse of those morals, this had been an objection indeed. But in that even the divinity of his doctrine most eminently appears; that the finger of God upon the tables of our hearts, and the pens of the inspired writers in the volume of the Gospel, have prescribed us one and the same lesson. As for us, whose employment it is to teach that lesson to others, let us but express it also in our own lives and conversations; let us but add that credit to

[w] Matth. xix. 8.

our doctrine, that reputation to our profession: so may we expect to bring over all our adversaries to the truth and power of religion; so may we expect, when we give the account of our talents, to be received with that blessed approbation, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Master.*

A SERMON UPON POPERY,*

PREACHED AT CAMBRIDGE,

November the fifth, 1715.

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2 CORINTHIANS, ii. 17.

For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

OUR text, as it exhibits to us two contrary characters, of *many that corrupt the word of God*, and of *some that handle it in sincerity*, may fitly represent the two different views of the Church under Popery and the Reformation; and may furnish a proper discourse for the solemnity of this day, when we are met to commemorate the public deliverance from one of the most impious and bloody attempts that even popish pravity and corruption either contrived or favoured.

[* This admirable discourse, well suited to the peculiar circumstances of those times, was attacked by a Calvinistic dissenter named Cummins (or Commins) in *Remarks on Dr. Bentley's Sermon upon Popery: Preach'd before the University of Cambridge, November the 5th*, 1715.

Quid dignum tanto feret hic Promissor Hiatu?
Parturiunt Montes. *Hor.*

1716, 8vo, pp. 24. Cummins was answered in *Reflections on the Scandalous Aspersions cast on the Clergy, By the Author of the Remarks upon a Sermon on Popery, Preach'd by the Rev^d. Dr. Bentley, November the Fifth*, 1715. *With a particular Vindication of the Doctrine of Universal Redemption. Anseribus cibaria publice locantur et canes aluntur in Capitolio ut significent si fures venerint, at fures internoscere non possunt, significant tamen si qui noctu in Capitolium venerint.—Quod si luce quoque canes latrent cum deos salutatum aliqui venerint, opinor iis crura suffringantur, quod acres sint etiam tum cum suspicio nulla est. Tull. Orat. pro Rosc. Amerino.*—Οὐμενοῦν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ——δύνασαι ἀντιλέγειν ἐπεὶ Σωκράτει γε δυδὲν χαλεπόν. *Plat. Symp.* 1717, 8vo, pp. 43.—It has been said that the last-mentioned tract was written by Bentley himself; "which (observes Dr. Monk, *Life of B.*, vol. i. p. 383) nobody can believe who reads half a page of the pamphlet."—D.]

But the text will be still* more proper to this anniversary occasion, when we have attained to the true and full sense of it, as it lies in the original. For our English translators have not been very happy in their version of this passage. We are not, says the apostle, καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ: which our translators have rendered, We do not *corrupt*, or (as in the margin) *deal deceitfully with* the word of God. They were led to this by the parallel place, ch. iv. of this epistle, ver. 2, *not walking in craftiness*, μηδὲ δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, *nor handling the word of God deceitfully*: they took καπηλεύοντες and δολοῦντες in the same adequate notion; as the vulgar Latin had done before them, which expresses both by the same word, ADULTERANTES *verbum Dei*: and so likewise Hesychius makes them synonyms, Ἐκκαπηλεύειν, δολοῦν. Δολοῦν, indeed, is fitly rendered *adulterare*: so δολοῦν τὸν χρυσὸν, τὸν οἶνον, *to adulterate gold* or *wine*, by mixing worse ingredients with the metal or liquor. And our translators had done well if they had rendered the latter passage, μὴ δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον, *not adulterating, not sophisticating the word*. But καπηλεύοντες in our text has a complex idea, and a wider signification: καπηλεύειν always comprehends δολοῦν; but δολοῦν never extends to καπηλεύειν, which, besides the sense of *adulterating*, has an additional notion of unjust lucre, gain, profit, advantage. This is plain from the word κάπηλος, a calling always infamous for avarice and knavery: *perfidus hic caupo*,† says the poet, as a general character. Thence καπηλεύειν, by an easy and natural metaphor, was diverted to other expressions where cheating and lucre were signified: καπηλεύειν τὸν λόγον, says the apostle here; and the ancient Greeks, καπηλεύειν τὰς δίκας, τὴν εἰρήνην, τὴν σοφίαν, τὰ μαθήματα, to corrupt and sell justice, to barter a negotiation of peace, to prostitute learning and philosophy for gain. Cheating, we see, and adulterating is *part* of the notion of καπηλεύειν; but the principal essential‡ of it is sordid lucre. So *cauponari*, in the famous

[* be still; 1*st ed.* "still be."—D.] [† Hor. *Sat.* i. i. 29.—D.]
[‡ principal essential; 1*st ed.* "principal and essential.."—D.]

passage of Ennius, where Pyrrhus refuses the offered ransom for his captives, and restores 'em *gratis*:

> *Nec mi aurum posco, nec mi pretium dederitis,*
> *Non cauponanti bellum, sed belligeranti.**

So *nundinari*, *negotiari*, when used in the like metaphor, have a double aspect both to fraud and to profit; but the primary one to the latter. And so the Fathers expound this place: τοῦτό ἐστι καπηλεῦσαι, says St. Chrysostom, ὅταν τις χρημάτων πωλῇ, ὅπερ δωρεὰν ἔδει δοῦναι: *this is* καπηλεύειν, *when any one sells that for money which he ought to give freely.* So St. Ignatius, where he paraphrases our text, calls them Χριστέμποροι in an elegant compound; Χριστέμποροι, says he, τὸν λόγον καπηλεύοντες, καὶ τὸν Ἰησοῦν πωλοῦντες, *traffickers and traders in the Gospel, sellers of Christ:* and Greg. Nazianzen, with the† like elegancy, Χριστοκάπηλοι. So that, in short, what St. Paul says, καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον, might be expressed in one classic word, λογέμποροι, or λογοπρᾶται, where the idea of gain and profit is the chief part of the signification. Wherefore, to do justice to our text, we must not stop lamely with our translators, *corrupters of the word of God;* but add to it, as its plenary notion, *corrupters of the word of God* FOR FILTHY LUCRE: in which true version we shall find the specific character of Popery, which in all and every deviation from primitive Christianity made worldly profit and advantage its principal design; as my present discourse shall endeavour to shew you.

But before I enter upon that, I must crave leave to set another thing right in the text, where our translators have failed. *For we are not*, say they, AS MANY, *which corrupt the word of God:* but the original has not ὡς πολλοί, but ὡς οἱ πολλοί, *as the many*, as the multitude. These two senses are very different: *as many* may still be the lesser part; *as the many* must always be the majority: *as many* must mean here Christians only; *as the many* may include the heathens too: ὡς οἱ πολλοί, *as the world does, as the gene-*

[* Apud Cic. *De Off.* i. 12.—Vulgo, "*Nec cauponantes* bellum, sed *belligerántes*."—D.] [† the; 1*st ed.* "a."—D.]

rality does. *Οἱ πολλοὶ, the multitude, the community,* is a known expression in profane authors, opposed sometimes *τοῖς σοφοῖς, to the wise,* sometimes *τοῖς πλουσίοις, to the rich;* and ever denotes the *most,* and generally the *meanest,* of mankind. And it were to be wished, that our translators had either known this better, or better attended to it. There are few places in the New Testament where *πολλοὶ* comes with the article; and the most of those few are much injured in our translation. This learned audience will easily forgive me, if I here enumerate them all; being both a proper illustration of our present text, and very worthy of our observation for their own merit and importance.

Luke, vii. 47, *Ἀφέωνται αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αὐτῆς αἱ πολλαί:* here our translators have competently rendered it, *her sins, which are many, are forgiven;* though it might have been more easy and literal, *her many sins, her numerous sins, are forgiven.* But if *αἱ πολλαὶ* here had been confounded with *πολλαὶ* without its article, then the version would have been, *many of her sins are forgiven;* an interpretation manifestly defective, and, as exclusive of some of her sins, manifestly false.

Revel. xvii. 1, our translators were not so fortunate: *Come hither, and I will shew thee the judgment of the great whore, that sitteth,* say they, *upon* MANY WATERS; where the impropriety is visible; for how can one person be supposed to sit upon many waters at once? But the original is not *ἐπὶ πολλῶν ὑδάτων,* but *ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων τῶν πολλῶν,* upon *the many* waters, upon the vast, wide, and spacious waters: for it's known that *πολὺς* is often applied to continued quantity, as well as to discontinued; to magnitude and dimension, as well as to number.

Romans, xii. 5, *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office,* *οὕτως οἱ πολλοὶ ἓν σῶμά ἐσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ, so we being many,* say our translators, *are one body in Christ.* This version, indeed, is tolerable; but it had been better to render it literally, *so we the many* (*οἱ πολλοὶ*) *are one body in Christ* where it's plain that in this construction, in this opposition to one, *the many* denote

the whole multitude, the complex and aggregate body of Christians. And this will enable us to clear up another place of much greater consequence, Rom. V.; where, after the apostle had said, v. 12, *that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed* UPON ALL MEN (*εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους*), *for that all have sinned;* in the reddition of this sentence, v. 15, he says, *for if through the offence* (*τοῦ ἑνὸς*) *of one* (*οἱ πολλοὶ*) *many be dead* (so our translators), *much more the grace of God by* (*τοῦ ἑνὸς*) *one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded* (*εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς*) *unto many.* Now who would not wish that they had kept the articles in the version which they saw in the original? *If through the offence of* the one (that is, Adam) the many *have died, much more the grace of God by* the one *man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto* the many. By this accurate version, some hurtful mistakes about partial redemption and absolute reprobation had been happily prevented: our English readers had then seen, what several of the Fathers saw and testified, that *οἱ πολλοὶ, the many,* in an antithesis to *the one,* are equivalent to *πάντες, all,* in v. 12, and comprehend the whole multitude, the entire species of mankind, exclusive only of *the one.* So, again, v. 18 and 19 of the same chapter, our translators have repeated the like mistake; where, when the apostle had said, *that as the offence of one was upon* ALL MEN (*εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους*) *to condemnation, so the righteousness of one was upon* ALL MEN *to justification; for,* adds he, *as by* (*τοῦ ἑνὸς*) THE ONE *man's disobedience* (*οἱ πολλοὶ*) THE MANY *were made sinners, so by the obedience* (*τοῦ ἑνὸς*) *of* THE ONE (*οἱ πολλοὶ*) THE MANY *shall be made righteous.* By this version the reader is admonished and guided to remark, that *the many* in v. 19 are the same as *πάντες, all,* in the 18th. But our translators, when they render it MANY *were made sinners, and* MANY *shall be made righteous,* what do they do less than lead and draw their unwary readers into error? And from these observations, I have some suspicion that in the famous passage, Heb. ix. 28, *so Christ was once offered to bear the sins* OF MANY, *εἰς τὸ πολλῶν ἀνενεγκεῖν*

ἁμαρτίας, as our present copies read it; I am much persuaded, I say, that if the oldest MSS. were nicely examined, some of them would shew us, instead of εἰς ΤΟ πολλῶν, εἰς ΤΟ ΤΩΝ πολλῶν, *to bear the sins of* THE MANY; that is, as before, τῶν πάντων, of the *whole race* of men, exclusive of himself; agreeably to that of St. John, 1 epist. ii. 2, *He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also* FOR THE WHOLE WORLD; and to that of St. Paul, 1 Tim. ii. 6, *Christ Jesus, who gave himself* (ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων) *a ransom for* ALL. For it cannot appear improbable that the article should be dropped here, when we find it actually slipped in another place of this epistle, Heb. xii. 15, *Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby* MANY *be defiled,* διὰ ταύτης μιανθῶσι πολλοί. Thus all the printed books, and the generality of MSS.; but the famous Alexandrine, and another at Oxford, have μιανθῶσιν οἱ πολλοί, *lest* THE MANY *be defiled,* the multitude, the populace, the congregation; which certainly is the more elegant, nay the genuine reading, and ought to be assumed into the public editions.

We are now arrived at a full and adequate interpretation of our text. *For we are not as* (οἱ πολλοὶ) *the many,* the major part of the world, (καπηλεύοντες) *which adulterate and negotiate the word of God for our own lucre and advantage; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ.* And hereby we have made the nearer advances to a clear view and just character of Popery: we'll allow them to be the οἱ πολλοὶ, *the most* as well as the *worst* of Christians; nor at present will contend with them about their boasted titles of Catholic and Universal; for it was never yet so well with mankind, that the major part was the better. And then for the other mark, καπηλεύοντες, I shall now trace and expose their corruptions and cauponations of the Gospel: that they are true Χριστέμποροι, real Χριστοκάπηλοι, have perverted and abused the divine institution to the base ends of worldly profit and power, have consociated

Jesus with Belial, Christianity with Atheism; every part of their system, which our pious reformers renounced and exploded, being founded upon mere politic, built up and supported by the known methods of subtlety and force.

And yet I would not be thought to charge every single member of that communion with this heavy imputation. I question not but great numbers think and act in godly sincerity; every age has produced among them some shining examples of piety and sanctity. We do not now consider individuals, but the collective body of Popery; not private lives and secret opinions, but the public avowed doctrines, and the general practice of the managers. There was one pious family even in Sodom, and without doubt many wicked ones even in Jerusalem. Not every single person within the limits of the Reformation is as good as his profession requires, nor every papist as bad as the popish system permits.

And now, τί πρῶτον, τί δ' ἔπειτα? What can I better begin with than what our text suggests, their enhancing the authority of the vulgar Latin above the Greek original; so that we must search for St. Paul's meaning here, not in the notion of καπηλεύοντες, but of *adulterantes*; not of οἱ πολλοὶ, but of *multi* without its article, an original defect in the Latin tongue. Now, can any thing be more absurd, more shocking to common sense, than that the stream should rise above the fountain? that a verbal translation, which, were the author of it inspired, must yet, from the very nature of language (as has appeared above), have several defects and ambiguities; that such a translation, I say, by a private unknown person not pretending to inspiration, should be raised and advanced above the inspired Greek? Is it possible those that enacted this could believe it themselves? Nor could they suggest that the first Greek exemplar had been more injured by the transcribers and notaries than that of their version. More ancient MSS. were preserved of this than they could shew for the Latin. There were more, and more learned commentators to guard it; no age of the eastern empire without eminent scholars; while the west lay sunk many centuries

under ignorance and barbarity. And yet, in defiance of all this, the Latin is to be the umpire and standard, and the apostles to speak more authenticly in that conveyance than in their own words. Nay, a particular edition shall be legitimated and consecrated, with condemnation of all various readings; and two popes, with equal pretence to infallibility, shall each sanctify a different copy with ten thousand variations. These things are unaccountable in the way of sincerity; but if you view them on the foot of politic, as an acquest of power, authority, and preeminence, the council of Trent knew then what they did.

But though this itself is but a translation, yet no secondary translation must be made from it for the instruction of the people. They must hear the public liturgies in a language unknown to them, and jabber their *Credos* and *Pater-nosters* at home without understanding. But was not this Latin version at first the common language of the country? was it not first made, and received into public use, because the Greek was unknown there? If a Christian congregation may be duly edified, may pay acceptable devotions in a language unknown, the Greek original might have reigned alone and universal, and its Latin rival had never existed. Why, then, is Popery so cruel and importune, to withhold this common blessing? to continue the public worship in Latin, after it has ceased to be a living language, against the very reason that first introduced Latin? Seek not a good account for this in Scripture, not even in the Latin Bible; but seek it in the vile arts of politic, and the principles of Atheism. Their authority was secured by it over an ignorant populace; it gave a prerogative to the clergy: like the *ἱερὰ γράμματα*, the sacred and secret writings to the Egyptian priests, or the Sibylline oracles to the Roman *pontifices*, which no body else was to know.

No sooner had Christianity spread itself over the world, but superstition mixed and grew up along with it; a weed natural to human soil, complexionally inherent in the weaker sex, and adventitious to most of our own. Vast multitudes

of all nations withdrew from the world; renounced human society, and all commerce with their own species; abandoned the cities and villages for the solitude of woods, deserts, and caves; under a false notion of pleasing God better by such devotion and mortification. But all this was at first pure and simple superstition; no mixture of avarice and craft in it, no tincture of politic and worldly advantage; their known poverty and perpetual austerities wholly quit them of that suspicion. But how did Popery manage this foible of mankind to its lucre and interest? Under a pretence of a like retirement from the world in a life of prayer and contemplation, they began their monasteries, abbeys, nunneries, &c.; which by degrees so vastly multiplied, that, instead of their first pretence of retreating from the world, the very world was filled with them: instead of the old hermitical poverty, they had drained the riches of kingdoms, had engrossed the fattest of the lands; nay, had appropriated and devoured the very ministerial wages, the bread and sustenance of the parochial clergy, who were impoverished, made vile and contemptible, to feed these vassals of the popes in their laziness and luxury.

In the early ages of the Gospel there was a high and just veneration for the sepulchres and remains of holy men, for the memorials of them in statue or picture, for the places of their abode; and especially for the land of Palestine, which the patriarchs, the Son of God* and his apostles, had made sacred by their birth and habitation. This at first was within due bounds; but superstition was soon engrafted on it, and grew to excess: the remains and relics were supposed to work miracles; the images had not value only, but worship and adoration; long journeys were taken, to the great detriment of families, to visit holy places, and kiss the footsteps of saints and martyrs. These bigotries, though even then reprehended by the best Fathers of those ages, were yet without any mixture of craft and knavery. But Popery soon

[* the patriarchs, the Son of God; 1*st ed.* "the patriarchs, the prophets, the Son of God."—D.]

saw that here was a proper fund, to be improved and managed to great advantage. Instead of coercion and restraint, they advised, encouraged, commanded those superstitions, with such scandalous *καπηλεία*, such abominable traffic, as even paganism would blush at. All the graves and catacombs were exhausted to furnish relics; not a bone, not the least scrap of raiment of any saint, that was not removed into the holy wardrobe, to raise money to the shewers. Where the monuments were dubious and blended, the names and bodies of pagan slaves were taken into the church-calendar and treasury: disputes and quarrels arose among the numerous pretenders to one and the same relic, which could never be decided; but the victory was various and alternate, according to the fruitful inventions and ingenious lies of the contending impostors. Even statues and pictures of the same saint were made to rival each other; and the blessed Virgin, like Juno Lucina and Juno Sospita, had as many *numina* and specific powers as she had pictures and statues; one celebrated for one virtue, another for another. No piety was thought acceptable, no life religiously spent, without a pilgrimage to some foreign saint, where vows and rich offerings must be paid at the shrine. But, above all, the endeavour to gain the Holy Land, by driving out the Saracens, was the most promising project, the very masterpiece of Popery. What arts were used, and* what not used, to inveigle the princes and nobility of Europe into that romantic expedition! Every hour of grief or sickness, every hour of mirth and wine, were a snare and trepan to them. If, in any of those softer moments, they once rashly took the cross on their garments, the vow was irrevocable; to break it was thought attended with all misfortunes in this world, and damnation in the other. In the mean time, salvation, like soldier's pay, was promised and insured to all that embarked; the heavenly Jerusalem to be their certain acquisition, though they failed and perished in fighting for the earthly. Now while the world by these artifices was made mad and infatuate; while

[* and; 1*st ed.* "or."—D.]

princes abandoned their own realms, and left the regency in weak or treacherous hands; while for several generations all Europe was exhausted of its strength and its wealth, and the remainder overrun with superstition and leprosy; the contrivers of all this were not wanting to their own interest. 'Twas then, in the absence of so many kings, and the distracted condition at home, that Popery made its most plentiful harvest; then cities, with their large territories, were extorted out of the owners' hands, and made the patrimony of the church; then investitures, faculties, dispensations, bulls, the whole shop and warehouse of profit and power, were extended and exerted over all persons and employments; then, in a word, was mankind enslaved, and Popery trod upon the necks of princes. And well was it for Palestine that the Saracens kept possession of it. If Popery had succeeded in its attempt on that country, what a new revenue from pilgrimages! what an inexhaustible store of religious merchandise! every stone there would have been a sacred relic. If we may guess from some histories, the very soil would have been dug up and exported by this time, and customers invited to the purchase by a new legend of miracles. Not a church in Europe would have been counted holy, not a palace or seat lucky or prosperous, not an estate, not a field or close, fertile to the owner, that had not some of the holy earth to bless and to sanctify it.

When the empire was first Christian, though the bishops of Rome had no more under their inspection than the suburbicarian regions, yet the great city imperial, the metropolis of the western world, gave them a just preeminence above those of inferior and municipal towns. And so those of Constantinople had a due deference paid them by the other bishops of the east, as *βασιλεύτεροι ἄλλων*, presiding* over a diocese the most numerous and the most potent. A fit regard always was and ought to be had to their advice, concurrence, and assistance; since their example must needs have the greatest influence on the peace of the whole church.

[* presiding; 1*st ed.* "as presiding."—D.]

Now, how did Popery make use of this advantage of situation, to make spiritual Rome as much the empress of the church as ever civil Rome had been of the state? In long tract of time they reduced all under their power; not by our Saviour's declaration, *Ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ, Upon this rock I will build my church,* as if that was the Tarpeian rock, and the cliff of the Roman Capitol; but by the subtlest arts of politic, continued from age to age with indefatigable address; by sowing factions among all other bishops, and* promoting appeals to the arbitration of popes, who always decided for those that owned their authority: by creating new bishops against those in possession; the event whereof was both ways the certain increase of papal power; for either the pope's new title prevailed, or the former bishop, after long charge and vexation, was content, for quietness' sake, to keep his own, as the gift of the pope by an after act of confirmation. And as they then managed with the bishops, so in time they dealt with princes; fomented rebellions of their subjects; set brother up against brother in pretence to the crown; who was to own it, when obtained, as a donation from Rome; and the contract for it, that all the ecclesiastical dignities should be in the pope's collation. By these methods, continued through many successions, the result at last was, that he was the spiritual monarch of the universe, the acknowledged patron of all church preferments; that all bishops held their jurisdiction not from Christ, but from him; that kings themselves were no kings, till accepted and confirmed by him; that they might be resisted, deposed, or murdered, if they did not govern by his dictates and directions; that he, as visible head of the church, was superior to general councils; that he, perhaps at first some ignorant monk, after he was once chosen pope, though without the suffrage either of clergy or people, by a mercenary conclave and nocturnal cabal of cardinals, a new order contrived by Popery to depress and subdue the bishops, was immediately gifted with infallibility. O horrible profanation of a divine attribute!

[* and; 1*st ed.* "and then."—D.]

O audacious and ridiculous claim! which, though no pope can ever believe of himself, and the cardinals his electors, like the *haruspices* of old, may laugh at when they see each other; yet it's an useful pretence in the way of politic, and of great moment among the adoring crowds, to support and establish his usurped spiritual empire.

As the Christians in the first ages were all educated in the midst of paganism, and the most of them made converts out of it; so it could not be avoided, but that many must assume or transfer some pagan notions into the system of Christianity. Besides the one supreme God, the pagans had vast numbers of inferior deities, who had every one shares of the common devotion. This begot in many Christians a like worship of angels and saints, as mediators and intercessors between them and the heavenly Father. The *dii manes* of the pagans, and the parentations to their dead ancestors, produced a near resemblance to them among some Christians, that offered solemn prayers and expiations for the souls of their deceased relations. The Platonic notion, that the ἰάσιμα ἁμαρτήματα, the curable sins, the delible stains of departed souls, were scoured and purged off by proportionate punishments;

> ——— *aliæ panduntur inanes*
> *Suspensæ ad ventos; aliis sub gurgite vasto*
> *Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni;**

must naturally raise among some Christians a like persuasion about a future purgatory. These notions and practices, though quite repugnant to the holy Scriptures, were not discouraged nor forbid by Popery; but propagated, enjoined, and enacted, being a most sure and ample fund to increase the church's treasure. In course of time the whole calendar was crowded with saints; not a day in the year without its red letter: every trade and profession had its saint tutelar and peculiar, who must be retained and engaged with presents and oblations. Horses, cows, and sheep, every animal

[* Virg. *Æn.* vi. 740.—D.]

domestic, the fields and the vineyards, the very furniture of houses, must be annually blessed and sanctified, at a set price for the blessing: and if the old set of saints should by long time grow cheap and vulgar, there still was a reserve in Popery to enhance and quicken the low market, by making new and fresh ones in acts of canonization. And then, by their prayers and the masses for the dead, to ease and shorten the pains of purgatory, what a spacious door was opened for a perpetual flow of money! What family was not daily pillaged of some part of its substance? What heart could bear that his dead father should fry in the flames of purgatory, when a moderate sum might buy him out of them? Or who would not secure himself by a timely legacy for masses for his soul, without leaving it to the conscience and courtesy of his heir?

But what do we speak of this popish traffic for the sins of the dead, when the very sins of the living, the wages of damnation, were negotiated and trucked, indulged or pardoned, by the wicked politic of Popery! As in common life we daily see, that an officer shall permit and license those very frauds for money, which his office itself constitutes him and commands him to prevent; so has Popery done in that great affair of a Christian life, and the duties of the Gospel. To engross which profitable trade, it was first necessary that Rome should challenge the sole custody of the keys of heaven and hell, should claim the sole power of loosing and binding, should possess the sole mint of all spiritual licenses and pardons. When this was once arrogated and obtained, what an impious *καπηλεία*, what an extensive traffic was opened! As the other schemes drew in the superstitious and the bigots, so this was to wheedle and pillage the profane, the impure, the villains of the world. The common sale was soon proclaimed for indulgences and pardons for all crimes past or to come, already committed, or hereafter designed; the price raised and enhanced according to the deeper dye and blackness of the guilt. The stated market at Rome was not sufficient for the commerce: the princes only and the nobles

could afford to send thither for them; so that, for the ease and benefit of trade, blank instruments were issued out for all the countries of Europe, and retailed by the spiritual pedlars at the public markets and at the private doors: such a cheap pardon cried aloud for the more common sins of lying, swearing, drunkenness, or fornication; a higher price in private for robbery or murder; a higher still for sodomy or incest. Thus were the grace of God, the remission of sins, all the privileges of the Gospel, trucked and cauponated by Popery, for sordid and detestable lucre, upon the open scheme and the bare foot of Atheism.

'Tis true, indeed, that when the light of the Reformation broke out, and good letters revived and spread around, even the popish provinces grew too wise and sagacious for this gross imposture; such wretched wares were thenceforth chiefly vended among the poor ignorants of America. But there soon arose a new set of loose and profligate casuists, who, to engage on their side the libertine part of mankind, since impunity in sins would no longer be bought with money, should distribute it gratis, and instruct them to be wicked without remorse and with assurance. These are they who (contrary to St. Paul, Rom. iii. 8) *are* NOT *slanderously reported to say, Let us do evil, that good may come;* who excuse and patronise the vilest corruptions, the foulest cheats, forgeries, and extortions in common dealing; who teach that no faith promised or sworn to heretics or enemies is of any obligation; who defend common perjury and perfidiousness by the scandalous shifts of equivocals and mental restrictions; who have glossed and warped all the severe rules of the Gospel about chastity, charity, and forgiveness, to the worldly and wicked notions of gallantry and point of honour; who sanctify the horridest villanies, murders, plots, assassinations, massacres (like the intended one of this day), if designed for the service of the church; who, in a word, have given such vicious systems of moral, such a license to corrupt nature, as a heathen Stoic, Platonic, or Academic, nay, an Epicurean, though in himself never so wicked, durst not have polluted his pages with, out of reverence to his sect.

I might proceed, would the time permit me, to discover all the rest of their politic arts, the mysteries of their spiritual trade; for such are all their peculiar tenets, that were discarded at the Reformation. What availed it to the clergy, that the Scriptures expressly said, *marriage is honourable in all: let a bishop, let a presbyter, be the husband of one wife: one that ruleth well in his own house, having faithful children, kept in subjection with all gravity?* This did not suit with popish politic; this tied* and attached the clergy to the common interest of mankind; their affection to their own children made their country also dear to 'em, made them love and pity the abused laity; they were not vassals devoted enough to the service of a foreign master; the riches of the church did not flow in one channel, nor all revert at last to that one fountain and receptacle. And for these pious reasons, in spite of plain Scripture, of the authority of ages before, of all the lusts and impurities that must necessarily follow, a chaste legitimate marriage shall be forbidden to the clergy, and an adulterous celibacy shall be enjoined universal.

But what can plain Scripture avail against the avarice and pride of Popery, when both common sense internal, and the joint testimony of all our outward senses, must submit to its decrees, when 'tis to advance its profit or power? That due respect ever paid to *τὰ ἅγια*, the consecrated bread and wine at the holy communion, was easily raised by superstition and ignorance to the highest excess, to notions improbable and impossible. This fair handle was not neglected by Popery: by slow degrees transubstantiation was enacted into an article of faith; and a very beneficial one to the priests, since it made them the makers of god, and a sort of gods among the people. But we must think better and juster of the contrivers of it, than that they themselves believed it; they did or could believe it no more, than a proposition made up of the most disparate ideas, that *sound may be turned into colour, a syllogism into a stone.* 'Twas not ignorance nor stupidity, but the most subtle and crafty politic, that produced tran-

[* tied; *so 1st ed.: ed.* 1735, "tried."—D.]

substantiation. Thence the awful pomp, the august cavalcades, in the procession* of the hostie; as if they would outdo the pagan ones of Cybele;

Ingratos animos atque impia pectora vulgi
Conterrere metu quæ possint numine Divæ:†

thence the presence of God continually resident corporeal at the high altar: thence, to exhibit it perpetually there, the wafer, *panis ἄζυμος*, unleavened unfermented bread, was taken into the solemnity, both against ancient practice and the perpetual custom of the Greek church; because common bread would soon have grown mouldy, and not pass with the palate of the multitude for the body of God: thence, at last, in the xiiith century, was the cup denied to the laity; not for not seeing the plain words of the Scripture, *Drink ye* ALL *of this*; not for the dearness or scarcity of wine, which is cheap and common in those climates; not for the then pretended reason, that the mustaches or whiskers in the mode of that age used to dip into the holy cup; but because it was inconsistent with the rest of the show. So small a quantity of wine, even after consecration, would soon grow dead and vapid; would discover its true nature, if tasted after long standing. The wine, therefore, because it interferes with the standing ceremony and continued pageantry of transubstantiation, has not the honour to be reposited with the wafer on the altar, nor to accompany it in the solemn processions.

I might now go on to shew you a more dismal scene of impostures, their *judicia Dei*, the judgments of God, as they blasphemously called 'em, when no human evidence could be found: their trials by ordeal; by taking a red-hot iron in the hand; by putting the naked arm into hot boiling water; by sinking or swimming in pools and rivers when bound fast hand and foot: all of them borrowed or copied from pagan knavery and superstition, and so manageable by arts and slights, that the party could be found guilty or innocent just

[* procession; 1*st ed.* "processions."—D.] [† Lucret. ii. 622.—D.]

as the priests pleased, who were always the triers. What bribes were hereby procured! what false legacies extorted! what malice and revenge executed! on all which if we should fully dilate and expatiate, the intended tragedy of this day, which now calls for our consideration, would scarce appear extraordinary. Dreadful indeed it was, astonishing to the imagination; all the ideas assembled in it of terror and horror. Yet, when I look on it with a philosophical eye, I am apt to felicitate those appointed for that sudden blast of rapid destruction; and to pity those miserables that were out of it, the designed victims to slow cruelty, the intended objects of lingering persecution. For, since the whole plot (which will ever be the plot of Popery) was to subdue and enslave the nation, who would not choose and prefer a short and despatching death, quick as that by thunder and lightning, which prevents pain and perception, before the anguish of mock trials, before the legal accommodations of gaols and dungeons, before the peaceful executions by fire and faggot? Who would not rather be placed direct above the infernal mine than pass through the pitiless mercies, the salutary torments of a popish inquisition, that last accursed contrivance of atheistical and devilish politic? If the other schemes have appeared to be the shop, the warehouse of Popery, this may be justly called its slaughter-house and its shambles. Hither are haled poor creatures (I should have said rich, for that gives the frequentest suspicion of heresy), without any accuser, without allegation of any fault. They must inform against themselves, and make confession of something heretical; or else undergo the discipline of the various tortures; a regular system of ingenious cruelty, composed by the united skill and long successive experience of the best engineers and artificers of torment. That savage saying of Caligula's,* horrible to speak or hear, and fit only to be writ in blood, *Ita feri, ut se mori sentiat,* is here heightened and improved: *Ita se mori sentiat, ut ne moriatur,* say these merciful inquisitors. The force, the effect of every rack, every agony, are

[* Suet. *Calig.* 30.—D.]

exactly understood: this stretch, that strangulation, is the utmost nature can bear, the least addition will overpower it; this posture keeps the weary soul hanging upon the lip, ready to leave the carcass, and yet not suffered to take its wing;* this extends and prolongs the very moment of expiration, continues the pangs of dying without the ease and benefit of death. O pious and proper methods for the propagation of faith! O true and genuine vicar of Christ, the God of mercy, and the Lord of peace!

And now, after this short, but true sketch and faithful landscape of Popery, I presume there's but little want of advice or application. If this first character in the text belongs to Popery, let us secure the other to ourselves, *that we handle the word in sincerity, as of God, as in the sight of God in Christ.* The Reformation without this must forfeit its name, and the Church of England must lose its nature. *Let every one, therefore, that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.* Our very text informs us, that in the apostle's own days, when the church was in its greatest purity and simplicity, there were even then *many κάπηλοι, fraudulent dealers,* among its members; though the traffic must needs run low when the whole community was so poor. But when the emperors became Christian, and the immense revenues of the pagan priesthood were (as indeed they ought to be) all confiscated and distributed, without doubt the spoil and the

[* This powerful passage has been borrowed by Sterne. Part of the celebrated "sermon" introduced into *Tristram Shandy* is as follows:—"Go with me for a moment into the prisons of the Inquisition . . . . . Hark! hark! what a piteous groan! See the melancholy wretch who uttered it just brought forth to undergo the anguish of a mock trial, and endure the utmost pains that a studied system of cruelty has been able to invent. Behold this helpless victim delivered up to his tormentors,—his body so wasted with sorrow and confinement, you will see every nerve and muscle as it suffers. Observe the last movement of that horrid engine; see what convulsions it has thrown him into! Consider the nature of the *posture* in which he now lies stretched,—what exquisite tortures he endures by it. *'Tis all nature can bear!* Good God! *see how it keeps his weary soul hanging upon his trembling lips,—willing to take its leave, but not suffered to depart.*"—Sterne's *Works*, vol. i. pp. 247-250, ed. 1788.—D.]

plunder attracted crowds of new converts, and the courtiers found it useful to declare themselves good Christians. Even the Reformation itself did not make the slower progress for the vast riches of the monasteries that were to be dissolved; nor had it been less honour to it, if, as the lands and manors of the abbeys were justly restored to the laity, so their impropriations had reverted to the parochial clergy, from whom they had been robbed. To say the truth, the spirit of Popery is near as old as human race; 'tis in all ages and places, and even then exerts itself when it demolishes Popery. The generality of men, *οἱ πολλοὶ*, were always *κάπηλοι*, traders in a profession. The Epicureans of old, though they denied and derided the heathen gods, would yet gladly accept of a fat benefice, *opimum sacerdotium*, and, to gain an ample revenue, would officiate at those altars which they silently laughed at. Think not, therefore, that all the priests were the vilest of men, but that some of the vilest of men got in to be priests. They saw the opportunity of enslaving and pillaging mankind, if they could but manage the priesthood upon atheistical principles. This was the temptation, this gave the original to Popery; and nothing to be accused for it but human nature in common. What profession, what conjunction of laymen, if not continually watched, if not curbed and regulated by authority, have not abused the like advantage and ascendant in their several ways, to their private emolument, and the oppression of the public? Let us watch, therefore, against this fatal degeneration, incident to all things. He that aims *malis artibus* to arrive at church preferment, by sinful or servile compliance, by turbulency and faction, what is he but *κάπηλος*, a *trafficker* for sordid lucre? He that zealously vends his novelties, or revives dead and buried heresies to the disturbance of the community, what is he but a *trader* for the fame of singularity? He that labours to dig up all the fences of the church; to throw down her articles and canons, her liturgy and ceremonies; to extinguish her nurseries of learning; and when he has made her a mere waste and a common, shall call that a comprehension;

what is he but a vile *factor* to libertinism and sacrilege? He that propagates suspected doctrines, such as praying for the dead, auricular confession, and the like, whose sole tendency is the gain and power of the priest, what is he but a *negotiator* for his partisans abroad? what does he but sow the seeds of Popery in the very soil of the Reformation?

But if we are to watch against the silent tide of Popery in the small rivulets at home, much more against its inundation and deluge from abroad, which always meditates, and now threatens, to overwhelm us. If foreign Popery once return, and regain all the provinces that it lost at the Reformation, O the terrible storm of persecution at its first regress! O the dark prospect of slavery and ignorance for the ages behind! In tract of time it will rise again to as full a measure of usurped hierarchy as when the hero Luther first proclaimed war against it. For then was Popery in its meridian height: it was not raised up all at once, but by the slow work of many centuries. In all the steps and advances of its progress, the good men of the several ages opposed it, but in vain; they were overborne by a majority, were silenced by the strong arguments of processes and prisons; for it first subdued its own priests, before it brought the laity under its yoke. Good letters became a crime even in the clergy: or heresy or magic, according to the different turn of men's studies, was a certain imputation upon all that dared to excel. And though Popery, since the Reformation, has even in its own quarters permitted learning and humanity, and prudently withdrawn some of its most scandalous trumpery; yet if once again it sees itself universal, the whole warehouse, now kept under key, will again be set wide open; the old tyranny will ride triumphant upon the necks of enslaved mankind, with certain provision against a future revolt. The two instruments, the two parents of the Reformation, ancient learning and the art of printing, both coming providentially at one juncture of time, will be made the first martyrs, the earliest sacrifice to popish politic. The dead languages, as they are now called, will then die in good

earnest. All the old authors of Greece and Italy, as the conveyers of hurtful knowledge, as inspirers of dangerous liberty, will be condemned to the flames; an enterprise of no difficulty, when the pope shall once again be the general dictator. All these writings must then perish together; no old records shall survive to bear witness against Popery, nor any new be permitted to give it disturbance. The press will then be kept under custody in a citadel, like the mint and the coinage; nothing but mass-books and rosaries, nothing but dry postils and fabulous legends, shall then be the staple commodities, even in an university.

For the double festivity, therefore, of this candid and joyful day; for the double deliverance obtained in it, the one from the conspiracy of Popery, the other from its tyranny; for the happy preservation of our religion, laws, and liberties, under the protection of pious and gracious princes; for the flourishing estate of learning, and the prosperity of our nursing mother,—be all thanks, praise, and glory to God, for ever and ever. Amen.

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE KING GEORGE I.*

On February the third, 1716-7.

ROM. xiv. 7.

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

OUR apostle having in this chapter and before discoursed of the mutual duties and obligations in human life, concludes the whole with the words above, sententiously in way of aphorism, *That no one liveth to himself, and no one dieth to himself.* Which without doubt must seem a harsh paradox to a narrow-minded person, that is wholly involved and contracted within his own little self, and makes his private pleasure or profit the sole centre of his designs, and the circumference of all his actions. Indeed, the heathen poet in the epigram, a man of that very stamp, as *sitting in* pagan *darkness and the shadow of death,* teaches the downright reverse to our text: *Vive tibi,* says he, *nam moriere tibi.*† He took it as self-evident, *That every one dies to himself;* and therefore infers it as a consequence both plain and profitable, *That every one ought to live to himself.* But our inspired writer has here taught us a new and Christian lesson, a doctrine which is the source and spring of all true piety to God, of justice and beneficence to men, of public spirit, and all the other ingredients of heroic and godlike virtue; a doctrine, too, so pregnant of sense and truth, that it may be considered in various views, all different from each other, and all worthy

[* The 1st ed. adds, "at his Royal Chapel of St. James's:" it was delivered by Bentley in the capacity of chaplain to his Majesty.—D.]

[† "Uni vive tibi, nam moriere tibi,"—the last line of an epigram by an unknown author: see it in *Anth. Vet. Lat. Epig. et Poem.* t. i. p. 510. ed. Burmann.—D.]

of our serious speculation. I cannot now undertake to exhaust them all, in so short a discourse as is prescribed by the occasion; but I shall place before you some of the principal, at least some of the most general and obvious, which may furnish a proper hint and rise to your own further meditations.

I. *None of us*, says the apostle, *liveth to himself*. To live to a man's self, when considered at large, is to do all the actions of life with regard to himself alone; as a true free-born son of earth, not accountable to any other being for his behaviour and conduct, but carving out his own satisfaction in every object of desire, without any obligation or relation to a higher power. Now, in this sense, I conceive it's sufficiently plain, that none of us liveth, ought to live, or can live, to himself. 'Tis the thoughtless atheist alone that can be guilty of such absurdity, to imagine the first parents of human race sprung naturally out of the mud, without the foresight and efficiency of an intelligent cause. Every one, I say, but an atheist, (if an atheist can now possibly be, under the powerful light of the Gospel, and the late advances in natural knowledge, which directly lead and guide to the discovery of the Deity,) every one else must needs see and acknowledge that an almighty and all-wise God was our Creator; and consequently, that we live to him, the sole author of life, and not to ourselves. All our powers and faculties, all the properties and perfections of our nature, were gratuitously given us by the good will of our Maker, without our own asking or knowing. We neither produced our own being, nor can we annihilate it; we can neither raise it above, nor depress it below, the original standard of its essence, derived to the whole species. *Which of you*, says our Saviour, Luke, xii. 25, *which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?* And so also may we say, which of us creatures, by all our thought and industry, can add one specific power to our beings more than God has bestowed upon them? 'Tis true, indeed, we may either exert or clog our native faculties in different degrees; we may either in-

vigorate them by exercise and habit, or damp and stifle them by sloth and neglect; so that the same person under one education and tour of life would extremely differ from himself had he fallen under another. But with all our endeavours we can exalt none of our faculties above their original pitch; we can never raise the aqueduct above the level of the fountain-head; we cannot advance our species, or change our human nature to a superior class of being; we must all continue in our settled rank and degree, as God was pleased to place mankind in the great scale of the creation: 'tis the will and decree of God that we are what we are; and as we are all his creatures, the work of his hands, his servants of such particular station, we do all *live* to him, and *not to ourselves*.

II. But then, *secondly*, besides the title of creation, even on the account of our conservation, we so entirely subsist upon the power and will of God, that in this view also we must needs confess that *none of us liveth to himself*, but to him. For as God at first by his almighty power produced the world and all creatures out of nothing, so by a perpetual efficacy and emanation of the same power he sustains them all from relapsing into nothing. 'Tis concluded, I think, among all those that have well considered these matters, that the same divine energy which gave a being to any creature must be constantly and incessantly exerted to continue it in being. Could we suppose the great Creator but for one single moment to suspend and interrupt the communication of that power, the whole frame and system of nature must immediately drop and vanish into its primitive nullity. Every essence therefore, except his own eternal and immutable essence, is solely supported by him, and owes to him not only the first production, but the continuance of its being. From him alone depend not only *the breath of our nostrils*, the operations and instruments of mortal life, but the very existence of our souls and bodies: upon his invariable will, upon his inviolable promise, rest all our hopes of future glory, and all the prospect of happy immortality. This the

voice of reason dictates to us, and the authority of holy Scripture puts it out of question; *for in him*, says our apostle, Acts, xvii. 28, *we live, and move, and have our being.* And if we all live and exist *in him*, much more do we live *to him*, and none of us *to himself.*

III. But again, *thirdly*, the proposition, now our text, may be considered in another view, not only with respect to God, our creator and preserver, but with reference to the several parts of the creation itself. If we survey the whole system of it, as far as human understanding and industry have yet advanced, we shall not find one single thing made absolutely for itself, but to bear likewise some office, some subservience to the uses of its fellow-creatures; the all-wise Author of the universe having so contrived every part of his work, that they are all coherent and contributive to each other, and, by their mutual operations, conduce every one its share to the economy and beauty of the whole. Thus, astronomy informs us that the moon, not barely made to *govern our night*, though so very useful to our earth by reflecting the sun's rays to it, receives again the like benefit from our earth in a greater measure than she gives it. 'Twere very easy, if this occasion was proper for it, to shew the like relation in all known instances of nature; how every thing conspires to the general good, and was made for each other, as well as each for itself, and all for the glory of their Maker. 'Tis enough to say, once for all, what true philosophy assures us, that every least particle of body, every atom of the world, has its operation and passion perpetual and reciprocal with all the rest of the world besides it; such an alliance being established between all the matter of the universe, that the whole is linked together by mutual attraction or gravitation, working regularly and uniformly according to quantity and distance; which is the great instrument in the hand of God to support the permanent frame of things in the same posture as at first it was constituted. Now, if all the visible world be thus made for each other, how dare we entertain the thought that we alone should be made to live to our-

selves? Some, indeed, have had the vanity to assert, that all the world was made for the use of man, and man for his own enjoyment: a very insolent presumption; a composition of self-love, partiality, and natural pride; when we have neither a due knowledge of ourselves, nor of the things about us. By the late improvements of science and art, there are discovered such new regions in the universe, new to us, though as old as our own; such immense tracts of sky, and innumerable stars, each equal to our sun and his spacious system, which never before entered into man's imagination; that it's scarce possible to think in earnest that all those were created for our sakes only, seeing our world was grown old before we had the least tidings of their very existence. And this may teach us both the modesty and the judgment to think, that even in the intellectual world there may be numerous ranks and classes of rational creatures, some inferior and many superior to us in the perfections of their several natures. What arrogance, therefore, for us, for us that probably make so small a figure in the great sum of the creation, to think we only were made exempt from the universal law of service and dependence! Has not God himself told us, in the apostle's words, Heb. i. 14, that even the angels themselves *are all ministering spirits?* But if those glorious beings *live* to subserve and minister to others, how can we, so far below in* natural powers, station, and dignity; how can we presume we owe service to nothing, but are made *to live only to ourselves?*

IV. But, *fourthly*, let us now proceed from the natural world to the moral; and in that view we shall still more clearly discover the truth of our text, *That none of us liveth to himself.* Our Creator has implanted in mankind such appetites and inclinations, such natural wants and exigencies, that they lead him spontaneously to the love of society and friendship, to the desire of government and community. Without society and government, man would be found in a worse condition than the very beasts of the field. That di-

[* below in; 1*st ed.* "below them in."—D.]

vine ray of reason, which is his privilege above the brutes, would only serve in that case to make him more sensible of his wants, and more uneasy and melancholic under them. Now, if society and mutual friendship be so essential and necessary to the happiness of mankind, 'tis a clear consequence, that all such obligations as are necessary to maintain society and friendship are incumbent on every man. No one, therefore, that lives in society, and expects his share in the benefits of it, can be said to live to himself. No, he lives to his prince and his country; he lives to his parents and his family; he lives to his friends and to all under his trust; he lives even to foreigners, under the mutual sanctions and stipulations of alliance and commerce; nay, he lives to the whole race of mankind: whatsoever has the character of man, and wears the same image of God that he does, is truly his brother, and, on account of that natural consanguinity, has a just claim to his kindness and benevolence. Not that private offenders are not to be punished with loss of goods, of liberty, of life itself, in proportion to the offence; nor just wars not to be undertaken for the security of national happiness: wars and offences *will come* (such is the imperfection of human state), and *woe be to them by whom they come*. But then those very severities, the necessary effects of penal laws at home, and of wars and ruptures abroad, do all arise and flow from a principle of love and kindness. 'Tis a superior love for the good of the whole community, which makes it necessary to cut off those noxious members of it; as mortified limbs are freely parted with to preserve the rest of the natural body. Certainly the nearer one can arrive to this universal charity, this benevolence to all human race, the more he has of the divine character imprinted on his soul; for *God is love*, says the apostle; he delights in the happiness of all his creatures. To this public principle we owe our thanks for the inventors of sciences and arts; for the founders of kingdoms, and first institutors of laws; for the heroes that hazard or abandon their own lives for the dearer love of their country; for the statesmen that generously sacrifice their private profit

and ease to establish the public peace and prosperity for ages to come. And if nature's still voice be listened to, this is really not only the noblest, but the pleasantest employment. For though gratitude, and a due acknowledgment and return of kindness received, is a desirable good, and implanted in our nature by God himself, as a spur to mutual beneficence, yet, in the whole, 'tis certainly much more pleasant to love than to be beloved again. For the sweetness and felicity of life consists in duly exerting and employing those sociable passions of the soul, those natural inclinations to charity and compassion. And he that has given his mind a contrary turn and bias, that has made it the seat of selfishness and of unconcernment for all about him, has deprived himself of the greatest comfort and relish of life. Whilst he foolishly designs *to live to himself alone*, he loses that very thing which makes life itself desirable. So that, in a word, if we are created by our Maker to enjoy happiness and contentment in our being; if we are born for society, and friendship, and mutual assistance; if we are designed to live as men, and not as wild beasts of the desert; we must truly say, in the words of our text, *That none of us liveth to himself.*

V. But again, *fifthly*, besides this moral view of the world, if we consider the state of human life as it's influenced by religion and the Gospel of Christ, we shall yet have a clearer discovery of the truth of our text. For a man truly religious cannot be said *to live to himself*, but to God, to whom he has dedicated his worship and service. The service of God is the first principle and ultimate end of all his thoughts and actions. Even in the smallest affairs of life, *whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever he does, he does all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. x. 31. In this he is elevated and engaged to a higher pitch of duty above the rules and obligations of mere morality; that in things seemingly indifferent he has still his eye fixed on heaven, how every thing may conduce to God's honour, and to peace and righteousness among men. And in this stricter acceptation the words are

used* by our apostle; *οὐδεὶς ἡμῶν, none of us*, of us Christians, *liveth to himself, καὶ οὐδεὶς, and none* (not *no man*, as in our English version, but *none* of us Christians) *dieth to himself.* Christianity excludes all selfishness, not only in the total and complex of *living*, but in the minutest particulars and circumstances of *life*. For 'twas a controversy of the† smaller size that gave occasion to our text: 'twas neither about essential duties of moral, nor important articles of faith; but about matters of free choice and indifference, of scruples only and infirmities; about observation of days, and distinction of meats; things of lawful use or neglect to those that knew their own liberty. And yet even in this case our apostle declares that both sides had the glory of God in their view, and not an indulgence to their own appetites or opinions. *For he*, says he, *that observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he that observes not the day, to the Lord observes it not: and he that either eats or abstains, to the Lord he doth either, and giveth God thanks. For none of us*, then adds he, *liveth to himself, and none* (of us) *dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.* And the truth is, such a general resignation of one's self to God is the first contract, the express covenant of our religious profession. When we first take the badge of Christianity, our very souls and bodies are made an offering to Christ; we have nothing left us that we may call our own, as separate from his interest and service; *we are dead unto the world and to sin, and live to God and to righteousness*; we live no longer to ourselves. *Christ*, says the apostle, *died for all; that they which live should not thenceforth live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again.*

VI. And then, *sixthly*, while a good Christian is persuaded that we ought to live unto Christ, in subordination to that duty he lives to all his fellow-members in Christ, to all

[* are used; 1*st ed.* "are here used."—D.]
[† the; 1*st ed.* "this."—D.]

those for whom our common Saviour suffered. He considers both his natural abilities, and the external blessings of Providence, as a talent committed to his care to be employed for the public good, for promoting piety, and virtue, and prosperity among men; expecting at the great day to be called to his account by an all-knowing and impartial Judge. For he sees there is no station or condition of life, no office or relation, or circumstance, but there arises from it such special obligation, that he may truly be said to live to others rather than to himself.

If any persons can be conceived to enjoy the prerogative of *living to themselves*, some perhaps may imagine that the monarchs and princes of the world, with the chief ministers under them, have the fairest claim to that privilege, as possessing and commanding in the largest measure all the power, and splendour, and voluptuousness of life. But if things are weighed in the just balance of reason and truth, they perhaps of all others have the least pretence to *self-living*. For though God himself has described them, that they are *gods among men*, as bearing the character and image of divine power and authority, yet all that superiority is solely derived and delegated from him; 'tis a mere trust put into their hands; they are only commissioners under him, and accountable to him for the discharge of their great office. So that they can the less be said to *live to themselves*, inasmuch as the extent and sphere of their duty is wider than that of others. For if the ancient remark be always found most true, *That the master of the house is the veriest servant of all his family*,[a] because he has the care and concern for all; so, if the boldness of the comparison may be allowed, the supreme magistrate himself, and those that are next below him, are the veriest subjects in all his dominions. An inferior magistrate or a private subject hath his service confined within narrower limits; the prince's and the prime officer's duty extends over the whole; so that by being the masters and protectors of all, they really become the servants of all.

[a] Εἷς ἐστὶ δοῦλος οἰκίας, ὁ δεσπότης. [Menand. p. 319, ed. Meineke.—D.]

They watch, that others may sleep; they provide by timely thought and long views for the future, that others may rest secure in the possession of the present; they upon great emergencies run all the hazards of war abroad, that others may dwell in peace and tranquillity at home. And is this to *live to one's self?* Surely he that employs and dedicates all his thoughtful hours, that exposes his very life, to the safety of the public, will not be thought to live to himself, but to the welfare of his nation.

But then there's a just return of service due from subjects to their governors; a faithful loyalty, a cheerful obedience, a reverential honour and esteem. We must pay them the true service of the heart, sincere good wishes and affectionate daily prayers for their safety and success: far less should we be of those that *interpret* all actions of their governors; that warp the most innocent occurrences to censure and calumny; that charge every adverse turn of Providence to a failure in their conduct; always complaining and traducing, so as even to wish for cross accidents in the public administration, to purchase the malicious pleasure of murmuring and accusing. Nor is this tribute of our hearts the only right of our governors; even our possessions too, the gifts of our ancestors, and the very acquests of our own hands, are not entirely our own, but in part due to the community, and ought cheerfully to be paid, when they are lawfully exacted. So that subjects also cannot be said to live solely to themselves, but partly, and perhaps principally, to their prince and their country.

But at least the wealthy retired person, that enjoys an ample inheritance without the toil and incumbrance of public employments, he perhaps may be tempted to imagine that he can and may *live to himself*, and his own sole ease and diversions. But let such a one consider, that even in the most private life there are various relations and duties thence arising; as a husband, as a father, a master, a neighbour, a member of the community, of Christianity at large, of the whole race of mankind: or, besides all these, let him hear

the words of the apostle, *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* Here's the rich man's special duty, here's his peculiar province; he is constituted a minister and distributor of God's bounty for the relief of those that are helpless, in calamity and want. And if he prove an *unjust steward;* if he squander his talents in luxury, or hoard them up with uncharitable avarice; he'll at last be found among those cursed and miserable, *who saw our Saviour hungry, and gave him no meat; thirsty, and gave him no drink; naked, and clothed him not; sick or in prison, and relieved him not: for inasmuch as they did it not to one of their poor neighbours, they did it not to him.* Surely, therefore, the rich persons cannot be said *to live to themselves,* since they are only trustees under God for the poor of the world. And then, as for the poor themselves, they, I presume, of all men will never be suspected as living to *their selves,* whose hard fate and condition in life makes others' pride and arrogance imagine, that they are born and designed for nothing so much as to live and labour for them.

And now having competently shewn, through the several relations and conditions of human life, that none of us *liveth to himself,* let us proceed to the *second* branch of our text, and advance our thoughts and views beyond this world to another. And indeed, if the former proposition be established and allowed, *That no man lives to himself,* 'tis a short and ready inference from it, *That no man dies to himself:* for death, abstractly considered, is nothing but a mere privation; 'tis the clause only and the period of life. So that if the whole line of life be in the hands of another, and not in our own, death, which is only the extremity, the last point of that line, must of necessity be in the same hands. If we *live,* therefore, to God, and not to ourselves, we must needs *die* to him also.

But let none of my hearers so misinterpret our apostle, as if, by saying *none of us dies to himself,* he taught that

none of us could be accessory or contributing to his own death. Without doubt he was not of their opinion, that believe the time, cause, and circumstances of every man's death to be fixed as* immovably by God's prescience as by necessity or fate. God can foresee contingencies, the free resolves of rational agents, as well as the most necessary events in the material and inanimate world; but the divine prescience does not superadd nor imply a fatal necessity. That notion robs us of our free-will, of our reason, of our very soul; is repugnant both to observation and the revealed word of God. *Bloody and deceitful men*, says the royal Psalmist, *shall not live out* HALF *their days;* so that impiety and guilt deprived them of half that space of life, that in a natural course of things they might have arrived to. And does not daily experience teach us, that intemperance, temerity, and violence, cut men off in the flower of their age, and in the very meridian of life? And again, how many are daily reprieved and rescued from the very jaws of impending death by the saving care and skill of the physician! But then withal, though the space of life may be thus *shortened*, and the thread of it broken by such accidents, (though even those too come to pass, not without the foreknowledge and permission of God,) yet perhaps it can never be *lengthened* by all the power and wisdom of man. A flower or fruit may be plucked off by force before the time of their maturity; but they cannot be made to outgrow the fixed period when they are to fade and drop of themselves. The hand of nature then plucks them off, and all human art cannot withhold it. And as God has so appointed and determined the several growths and periods of the vegetable race, so he seems to have prescribed the same law to the various kinds of living creatures. In the first formation and rudiments of every organical body, there are contained the specific powers both of its stature and duration. And when the evolution of those animal powers is all exhausted and run out, the creature expires and dies of itself, as ripe fruit falls from the tree. So that, as we cannot

[* as: *not in 1st ed.*—D.]

add one cubit, one inch, to our stature, so neither can we add one day, one hour to our years, beyond that fixed limit of natural life to which our original frame and constitution was made to extend. So certain is it that none of us either liveth or *dieth* to himself, but all of us to God; who has given to each of us his particular body, with the determined powers and period belonging to it.

2. But then again, besides our dying to God, even in reference to men, we die to others, and not to ourselves. A good Christian should, in every stage of life, act all to God's honour and the good of mankind; but especially at his departure, in that last scene of mortality, which is most observed by the spectators. *His light*, in our Saviour's language, *should always so shine before men, that they may glorify the Father, that is in heaven:* but particularly in that last glimpse of life, when the lamp is going out, it ought to break forth in an extraordinary lustre. The view of approaching death removes all such disguises and varnishes as at other times are suspected to conceal or colour men's actions and opinions. Every man at the dying hour is presumed to speak his true sense of things; so that the words and behaviour of a departing soul has [have] the most powerful influence on the minds of the living. And as Sampson slew more of the Philistines at once at his death than in all the victories of his life before, so an apostle or a confessor of Christ has made more converts to the Gospel at the scaffold or the faggot than by all the labours of his former ministry. And 'twas this design and view, that made so many of the primitive Christians even breathe and thirst after martyrdom. To die solitary in a bed, amidst the tears of a few friends, was an afflicting consideration; 'twas their daily and ardent prayer, that the last act of their lives might rather be exhibited on the theatre of the world, to confirm and seal publicly with their blood what before they had propagated in more private assemblies. 'Tis true indeed, and blessed be God's providence for it, that such examples as these need not, cannot be copied by every one. Where God has given

peace and tranquillity to his church, and brought the civil power itself under the easy yoke of the Gospel, the laurels of martyrdom do not grow there. But however, in the general, 'tis the duty of every one, within the sphere of his acquaintance, as far as his example can influence, as the nature and circumstances of his sickness may permit, to glorify his Maker and Redeemer at his death, at his passage from this short life to an endless immortality. So that none of us can be said to die only to ourselves, but to God, and to those that survive us.

3. But then, last of all, let us extend and enlarge our view even beyond the prospect of death and the grave; and we shall find that even in those everlasting dwellings prepared for the good and the bad, none shall live to himself, but one to another. Even the torments of the damned, *where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,* will receive a vast accession of misery and woe from the mutual *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.* Even there they will not *live* and suffer to themselves; but the pains of each will be multiplied and enhanced by the horrible consort and universal accents of sorrow and lamentation. But the idea of this is too frightful to be dwelt on; it curdles the very blood, and subdues the imagination. Let us rather transfer the fancy to a more agreeable image, the blessed station of saints and angels, those regions of light and joy, where they *die indeed no more,* neither to themselves nor others, but *live* immortally to God, and to all the glorified company. For even heaven itself, without communion and society, would lose half of its relish: even there, to live eternally *to one's self,* has some notion in it and tincture of torment eternal. No selfishness inhabits there; they compose a celestial quire, perpetually celebrating the praises of God in hallelujahs of gladness and devotion. Each soul has its living spring, an ebullition of its own joy, incessantly receiving from and adding to the general happiness. As all receive without measure from the same fountain of light, so one happy soul reflects to another reciprocal rays of pleasure and amity. The contem-

plation of the divine wisdom, the admiration of his transcendent goodness, of the infinity of his power, displayed in all his works, eternally subminister to the whole adoring society fresh anthems of praise, fresh raptures of love, and fresh congratulations of the common felicity. May the God of heaven then so fill up the number of his elect, that millions of millions there may surround his throne, and make up an assembly worthy of those great and glorious mansions. To which God of his infinite goodness bring us all, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

VISITATION CHARGE.

(From *The St. James's Evening Post, No.* 246, *from Thursday, December* 20, *to Saturday, December* 22, 1716.)

A SPEECH*

BY DR. BENTLEY, ARCHDEACON OF ELY,†

TO THE CLERGY OF THAT DIOCESE,

At his Visitation held in Cambridge, December 11th,‡ 1716.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN OF THE CLERGY,

In a season so very severe, and on the shortest days of the year, when it wants an apology for even calling you together, it would be a double fault to detain you with a long and tedious charge. I shall only, therefore, in a few words, congratulate you and myself upon the happy change in public affairs since my last visitation. The face of things

[* "Dr. George Hickes, the deprived dean of Worcester, who was regarded as the head of the Nonjuring clergy, being lately dead, the publication of his papers revealed the intentions of his party respecting the church, whenever the Stuart line should be restored. They held that all the conforming clergy were schismatic; and pronounced the invalidity of orders conferred by the bishops made by usurping monarchs; consequently all baptisms performed by those schismatic divines were deemed to be illegal; and it was resolved that neither one nor the other should be acknowledged, until the parties had received fresh ordination or fresh baptism from the hands of their own part of the church, which had never bowed the knee to Baal. The tendency of these purposes was obvious, and it was important that they should be generally known. On this ground, Dr. Bentley, as Archdeacon of Ely, summoned the clergy of that diocese, among whom were believed to be many Jacobites, to a visitation in the unusual and inconvenient month of December." — Monk's *Life of Bentley*, vol. i. p. 426.—D.]

[† Bentley was collated to the archdeaconry of Ely in June, 1701.—D.]

[‡ In giving the date December 11, I follow Dr. Monk; see *Life of Bentley*, vol. i. p. 427: *The St. James's Evening Post*, and Oldmixon's *History of England, sequel to the Reigns of the Stuarts*, (where this charge is quoted with the highest commendation, p. 629,) make the date "December 13."—D.]

was at that time very cloudy and melancholy; an open rebellion broken out in the bowels of the land: but at present, by the blessing of God, it has recovered its former countenance and air. So that henceforth, under the fortitude, wisdom, and clemency of our most gracious sovereign King George, by his mild victories at home, and his prudent alliances abroad, we may surely presage and promise, as now commenced and flowing on, a most prosperous age to Great Britain.

And in this pleasing prospect, we of the clergy have particular reason to rejoice above our fellow-subjects of the laity, when we patiently consider the deplorable condition of the ministers of our church, had the fortune of the sword fallen out contrary, and had a popish pretender been placed on the throne.

I need not now paint to you what horrid scenes were prepared for us, had we once lain at the feet of our popish enemies abroad: a church (as it has long been managed) whose very mercies are cruel, whose promises are all deceits, whose riches and power (the two grand aims of their polity) are our own certain beggary and slavery. On this, I say, I need not now expatiate, having lately done it in a sermon,* which since our last meeting I had the honour to preach before this learned University.

But what I would now remark to you, is the usage that was intended us by the once pretended members of our own church, *who* (in the apostle's style) *went out from us, but were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.*

These, by the hasty publication of some posthumous writings of their superiors,† have discovered how kindly they would have used their brethren of the clergy, even those that were most tender to them, and perhaps contributed to their subsistence, had their pretended prince been once settled secure in the monarchy.

[* See the *Sermon upon Popery*, p. 241.—D.]
[† See note * in the preceding page.—D.]

Every one of us clergymen present, whose age does not date his orders before the Revolution, and, except a small handful, the whole complex of the English clergy (for even our seniors were to be brought in guilty by a secondary fetch), must have disclaimed and renounced his present orders, and the younger and major part of us their very baptism; unless we chose to incur the nominal crime of schism, and the real penalty of deprivation. We must have owned, and publicly professed, that the highest exercises of our ministerial function have been all along invalid and null, nay, sinful and abominable to God; that consequently all church-preferments, possessed by any of us under such incapacity, were usurped, forfeited, and actually void; not dignities only and parochial livings, but all those masterships and fellowships of both Universities, which statutably (as most of them do) require holy orders. These preferments, if continued to any of us, whether by favour or neglect, must have been humbly accepted by us as a new presentation and gift: and whom of us they would have continued in the priestly office, by absolution, confirmation, or re-ordination (words equivalent in real effect), would have lain entirely at their judgment and good will; that is, if our preferment was of good value, and an agreeable morsel to our masters, we must either have descended to some poorer benefice in the church, or to the common condition and station of a layman. This pious and charitable scheme was ready prepared for us all, whenever they should have power to put it in execution; and to justify or colour it, such new doctrines, such absurd positions were hammered and forged, as sap and undermine the main foundations of Christianity; as make the very charter of man's salvation precarious and uncertain; as would render the whole visible church a mere office of heraldry; as were all adapted to secular and political views, with a spirit truly Machiavellian and Jesuitical.

This last will clearly appear, if we recollect the progress of their artifices for the space of some years past. The first step was a pretended attack upon the dissenters; the inva-

lidity of lay-baptism; though in this point the dissenters were of all men the least concerned, the Calvinian doctrine being more strict and rigorous against lay-baptism than either the primitive church's or our own. Why, then, against the dissenters? But the hook lay hid and out of sight, in the inference or second proposition: Lay-baptism is invalid; but the dissenting ministers are mere laymen, for want of episcopal orders; therefore they cannot efficaciously baptise. Thus a Calvinian position, untaught by our church, was craftily assumed, asserted, and espoused, on purpose to unchristen all the Calvinists themselves, and with them the much greater part of the whole Reformation: horrible to speak or think! But the authors and first broachers of it had a politic aim in't; 'twas directly levelled at the Protestant succession, against the illustrious House of Hanover, which by this wonderful doctrine was to be wholly excluded out of the church of Christ; and their tacit consequence was ready and plain, that of two evils, 'twas better to have a papist on the throne than a pagan.

This unchristening assertion, so false, so injurious to God and man, quite contrary to the good old doctrine of our reformed ancestors in England, and calculated by its contrivers merely for worldly ends and the Pretender's service, was delivered out and retailed with zeal, as a most important point of faith and salvation. And too many of our younger clergy, well-meaning men, and quite ignorant of the drift of it, preached strenuously the new opinion; drawn in by the specious bait of adding dignity and prerogative to their own episcopal orders.

But see now the second step of our politic theologues. They kept in reserve a distinction, to be produced at a proper juncture, that reduced and sunk us all, even those that had laboured for them, and proclaimed the highest necessity of episcopal orders and clerical baptism, to as low a condition as the very Calvinists themselves. For episcopal orders, which we thought ourselves possessed of, were, in their secret sense, within a very narrow compass, being proper to such only as

had received their ordination from the hands of the deprived bishops or their clandestine successors: so that every one of us were in an instant to be voted mere laymen, and the junior part of us to be on the self-same level with the unbaptised Indians, to be left (without some kind help) to the uncovenanted mercies of God. Thus the first position was minted to restore their pretended prince; and the second, when that restoration was got, to get into their own hands all the rich preferments of England.

Without doubt this last doctrine was to be carefully suppressed and concealed, till the occasion was ripe for it; and in the meantime their deluded assistants were to be soothed and cajoled with ambiguous words about the promised grandeur and splendour of the English church. But the modellers and projectors of this scheme happening to die, their inferiors, out of a blind veneration for their invaluable remains, were so providentially infatuated as to print and publish them quite out of season, while they still wanted the help of those whom they designed to make dupes of, while their Pretender's affairs were in the utmost desperation.

This certainly, or nothing can, will open the eyes of every clergyman amongst us, even of those whom these managers had decoyed either into a compassionate sense of their sufferings, or a kind opinion of their cause, or an indifference about the great event. And from henceforth every one of us must needs esteem and congratulate the establishment of the monarchy in the same royal race that now possesses it (the only Protestant blood of the renowned family of the Stuarts) as the sole security of his religion, his Christian liberty, his preferment, his very profession: since he finds that on both hands he was marked but* for a sacrifice; on the one to his implacable adversaries the Romans abroad, on the other to his ambitious and prevaricating brethren at home.

[* qy.—"out?"—D.]

REMARKS

UPON A LATE

DISCOURSE OF FREE-THINKING:

IN

A LETTER TO F. H., D.D.

BY

PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS.

Est genus hominum, qui esse primos se omnium rerum volunt,
Nec sunt ———————

——————— *An audes*
Personam formare novam? Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.

(From ed. 1743.)

TO

MY VERY LEARNED AND HONOURED FRIEND

F. H., D.D.*

AT LONDON, GREAT-BRITAIN.

SIR,

YOUR many and great civilities to me since our first acquaintance in the Low Countries, and the kind office† you then did me in conveying my *Annotations on Menander* to the press; but, above all, your taciturnity and secrecy, that have kept the true author of that book undiscovered hitherto, if not unguessed; have encouraged me to send you these present REMARKS, to be communicated to the public, if you think they deserve it; in which I doubt not but you'll exhibit a new proof of your wonted friendship and fidelity.

What occasioned you this trouble was the fresh arrival of a countryman of ours from your happy island, who brought along with him a small book, just published before he left London; which (as he says) made very much discourse there. He knowing me to be a great admirer of the books of your nation, and to have competently learned both to write and speak your language during my long stay at Oxford, made me a then agreeable present of that new *Discourse of Free-thinking*.

[* *i. e.* Dr. Francis Hare.—In the editions of the *Remarks* which Bentley put forth after his quarrel with Hare, he substituted "N. N." for "F. H., D.D.:" but in the ed. of 1743, the author being then dead, the latter initials were restored.—D.]

[† To Hare, while resident in Holland as chaplain-general to the Duke of Marlborough's army, 1710, Bentley committed his *Emendationes in Menandri et Philemonis Reliquias, &c., auctore Philelcuthero Lipsiensi*, to be forwarded to Peter Burman at Utrecht, who published them during the same year. The name of the real author was divulged by Hare, in spite of an injunction that he should keep it secret: hence the playful allusion above.—D.]

I, who (as you well know) have been trained up and exercised in *free thought* from my youth, and whose borrowed name PHILELEUTHERUS sufficiently denotes me *a lover of freedom*, was pleased not a little at so promising a title; and (to confess to you my own vanity) could not help some aspiring thoughts from pressing and intruding on me, that this *rising and growing** Society might one day perhaps admit into their roll a humble foreigner brother, *a free-thinker of Leipsic*.

But when once the curtain was drawn, and by a perusal of the book the private cabbala and mysterious scheme within became visible and open, that expectation and the desire itself immediately vanished. For, under the specious shew of *free-thinking*, a *set* and *system of opinions* are all along inculcated and dogmatically taught; *opinions* the most *slavish*, the most abject and base, that human nature is capable of. And upon those terms, neither you, I fancy, nor I, shall ever make our court for admittance into their club.

[* An allusion to the title of Collins's work, which, while the other writings of that once-distinguished person are now forgotten, is still remembered in consequence of Bentley's incomparable *Remarks*. It is styled *A Discourse of Free-thinking, Occasion'd by The Rise and Growth of a Sect call'd Free-Thinkers.*

Mundum tradidit hominum disputationi Deus. Eccl. 3. 11. *Vulg.*

Unusquisque suo sensu abundet. Rom. 14. 5. *Ib.*

Nil tam temerarium, tamque indignum sapientis gravitate atque constantiâ, quam, quod non satis exploratè perceptum sit & cognitum sine ulla dubitatione defendere. Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 1.

'Tis a hard Matter for a Government to settle Wit. Characteristicks, vol. 1. *p.* 19.

Fain would they confound Licentiousness in Morals with Liberty in Thought, and make the Libertine resemble his direct Opposite. Ib. vol. 3. *p.* 306.

London, Printed in the Year M.DCC.XIII. 8vo, pp. 178.—Alarmed, we are told, at a report that the work was to be prosecuted, Collins, soon after its appearance, went over to Holland. There he published an 8vo edition in the same type, with the same London imprint, the same date, and the same number of pages (though not always with the same quantity of matter in each page), as the first edition, with corrections of the Errata enumerated at the end of the first edition, and with a few omissions and alterations in those passages which Bentley had censured. It seems, indeed, that the *Discourse* was printed in 8vo more than once at the Hague; for Armand de la Chapelle (Pref. to *La Friponnerie Laïque*, p. xxiv.) says that he possessed two copies of the work in

This irksome disappointment, that my fine present should dwindle so far as to be below the value of waste paper, raised a hasty resolution in me to write some *Remarks* on it. And I find I shall have much the same employment as I had before on Menander. For I am here too to deal in *fragments;* the main of the book being a rhapsody of passages out of old and new writers, raked and scraped together, by the joint labour of many hands, to abuse all religion. *O infelices laborum!* Had I been at their consultation, I could have furnished them with many more: and I will now inform them, that if they will read all Galen, and the Greek commentators on Aristotle, they may find two or three passages much fitter for their purpose than any they have brought.

As for the gatherings out of your English authors, most of which are modern, and many still alive, I know you will not expect from me that I should examine those citations. The books are not to be found in Leipsic, having not yet passed the seas to us: the writers are but private men; and even your church is not answerable for what they say or print: not to add, that I, by birth and education a Lutheran,

English, the one extending to 173, and the other to 178 pages. Collins, shortly after, sent out a 12mo edition, also from the Dutch press: its title-page is the same as the title-pages of the earlier impressions, except that instead of the two quotations from Shaftesbury, a new passage of that writer is given; but it contains various important omissions, alterations, and additions, occasioned by Bentley's *Remarks*, to which, however, except in two places (pp. 25, 74) no reference is made! There appeared too at the Hague a French translation of the work, entitled *Discours sur la Liberté de Penser. Ecrit à l'occasion d'une nouvelle Secte d'Esprits forts, ou des Gens qui pensent librement. Traduit de l'Anglois et augmenté d'une Lettre d'un Médecin Arabe. A Londres,* M.DCC.XIV. This translation, which generally agrees with the 12mo edition, is supposed to have been made under the eye of Collins; but I have met with one proof (and perhaps others might be discovered) that the whole of it was not revised by him: at p. 28, "les uns y faisoient parler les animaux les plus grossiers comme *un bœuf*," is the version of "the pagans likewise had speaking *oaks*,"—the translator having confounded the English words *oaks* and *ox!* It is preceded by an *Avertissement* of eight pages, in which the author is highly praised.

Particular instances of the alterations, &c. in the above-mentioned editions will be found in the course of my notes on the *Remarks*.—D.]

am not concerned in any particular doctrines of your church which affect not Christianity in common.—However, if our *free-thinker* has shewn no more ability nor sincerity where he alleges the English writers than where Latin or Greek, he will soon have a just answer by some of your own divines.

I should now enter upon my Remarks, but that I am first to excuse myself, why I give you not the style of honour customary in England, I mean the title of REVEREND. The author indeed has made me sick of it, by his flat insipid drollery in tacking it to every name he mentions, six times together perhaps within as few lines. Can this now pass for wit among you? Is this reckoned good breeding or urbanity? What's become of the old English taste and finesse? Who may not be witty at this cheap rate, if he dares but be impudently dull? Give a loose to such vulgar sordid raillery, and the very best of quality, even royalty itself, even *ipsa sua sacra Cæsarea majestas* may be abused by its own title with an affected and sneering rehearsal of it. Yet this may be borne with however, and is therefore pardonable, because it's contemptible: but when buffoonery grows up to impiety, and dully profanes the most adorable names, *holy Apostles, blessed Saviour, ever-blessed Trinity,* by a fulsome repetition or a blasphemous irony; I must own to you I want English words to express my just sentiment. May the man grow wittier and wiser, by finding this stuff will not take nor please: and since, by a little smattering in learning and great conceitedness of himself, he has lost his religion, may he find it again by harder study and a humbler mind. For the misery of it is, he that goes a fool into atheism (as all are that now go), must come out of it like a fool too (if ever he comes), unless he acquires ten times the knowledge that's necessary for a common Christian.

Leipsic, 1713.*

[* *Not in 1st ed.*—D.]

REMARKS.

I.

Quod dedit principium adveniens! was said of Thraso in the comedy.* And our author, to give us as good a taste of his sufficiency, sets out with this sentence in his very dedication. *As none,* says he, *but artificial designing men, or crackbrained enthusiasts, presume*† *to be* guides *to others in matters of* speculation; *so none, who think they ought to be* guided *in those matters, make* choice *of any but such for their* guides.[a] Now, besides the falseness of the propositions, here is a small figure in rhetoric, called nonsense, in the very turn of this sentence. For if *none* but designing and crackbrained men presume to be guides to others, those *others*, that make use of guides, must needs have them and no other. Where then is the *choice?* or what power is there of *choosing*, when there's no room for comparison or preference? As *none*, says he, but priests presume to be guides, so none make *choice* of any other guides but priests. As no member of the body presumes to see but the *eye*, so no man makes *choice* of any other member to see with but the *eye*. Is not here now an admirable period, with exact propriety of word and thought?

But, to pardon the false connexion of his *as* and his *so*, pray what are we to understand here by *matters of speculation?* Why, all speculation without exception, every branch of *mathematics*, and all *science* whatever; for there is not one word preceding that restrains the sense to *speculations in theology*. So that, by this man's reasoning, we are

[* Ter. *Eun.* iii. 2. 4.—D.]

[† The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note p. 291) has, "presume to be guides, *or to have any authority over* others in matters of speculation; so *they* who think they ought to be guided in those matters *very naturally have recourse to* such for their guides," p. 2. The passage has a somewhat new turn in the French translation also, p. 3.—D.]

[a] Pag. 4.

to say thus: No man must take Euclid or Archimedes, our Leibnitz or your Newton, or any one else dead or living, for his guide in speculation: they were *designing men*, or else *crackbrained enthusiasts*, when they presumed to write mathematics, and become guides to others. As for our author, though he owns *all*[b] arts and sciences must be known, to know any *one* thoroughly; that not *one* of them can be omitted, if you pretend to be a judge in *one single* book, *the Bible*, 'tis so very *miscellaneous*; yet, if you will believe him, he renounces all guides, and is his own master, self-taught. He's a great astronomer without Tycho or Kepler, and an architect without Vitruvius. He walked alone in his infancy, and was never led in hanging-sleeves. And yet this mighty pretender has not broached one doctrine in all his book which he has not borrowed from others, and which has not been dictated by blind guides many ages ago.

But we'll indulge the man a little more, and suppose he did not mean *speculations* at large, but only in matters of religion. And then the sentence will run thus: *That none else presume to be guides to others in speculative points of religion, but either artificial designing men or crackbrained enthusiasts.* Now the man is in his true colours; and though he blundered in the expression, this was the thought he endeavoured at. And by this we must infer, that Erasmus, Grotius, Bochart, and other great men that have wrote commentaries on the Bible, and *presumed to be guides to others*, were either *crackbrained fools* or *designing knaves*. Nay, this author's beloved Monsieur le Clerc* must come in too for the hard choice of one of these epithets. And yet, what is strange, these very men, with more of your own

[b] Pag. 9, 10, 11.

[* Hare, in *The Clergyman's Thanks to Phileleutherus* (see note on the Dedicatory Epistle to the Second Part of these *Remarks*), has the following passage: "Such [*i. e.* head of the free-thinkers] Monsieur le Clerc, 'tis known, has been thought: though in justice to him I must say, I do not think he is embarked with them in the same ill designs; and whatever he has done that may look that way, 'tis, I verily believe, the effect of his being ill-advised or misinformed. However, in fact they have made their court

nation, the Chillingworths, the Spencers, the Cudworths, the Tillotsons, are honoured in other parts of his book, and recommended as *free-thinkers*. What inconsistence is this! what contradiction! No matter for that: that's a necessary ingredient in his scheme and his writings: *Huic aliter non fit, Avite, liber.** What he here prescribes to others, we must take for his own method: he defies all guides and interpreters; he disclaims all assistance; he'll decide upon all points *freely* and supinely by himself; without furniture, without proper materials. And, to speak *freely*, one would guess, by his crude performance, that he's as good as his word.

II.

In the close of his dedication he says thus: *It is therefore without the least hopes of doing any good, but purely to comply with your request, that I send you this apology for free-thinking.*[c] If I am not mistaken, as I may be about a foreign language, that expression of *doing any good* is capable of two senses; either of which I shall easily concede to the author. If he means, *he had not the least hopes of doing any good*, that is, of doing any good service, real benefit, true advantage to

to him, and he to them; and his *Bibliothèques* have been made the vehicles to spread on the continent the poison of their books; which, for want of learning in the writers, would otherwise have been kept within the four seas. But that is not the only use they have made of him: his French extracts of their books have been translated back again into English, that they might come recommended to the reader with the reputation of a *foreign* name that has been long known among the men of letters, and which their own illiterateness has made them very fond of: for I can't say his writings have been much esteemed among the truly learned; he writes in too much haste to do any thing correctly, and goes into too many parts of learning to be a thorough master in any one: and therefore his admirers have generally been such as owe their learning to his books, and have never gone to the fountain-head themselves, or read either ancient or indeed modern writers otherwise than in his extracts of them." p. 11.—D.]

[* Martial. i. 17. Quæ legis *hic:* aliter, &c.—D.]

[c] Pag. 4. [And so, too, the later editions in English (see note, pp. 290, 1). The French translation has: "Si donc, Monsieur, je vous envoie cette apologie, que j'ai écrite en faveur de la liberté de penser, c'est moins dans l'espérance de voir les hommes en profiter, que pour satisfaire à la demande que vous m'en avez faite." p. 4.—D.]

any one by his book, I am afraid that sense was true in his *intention*. Or, if he despaired of *doing any good*, that is, of having any effect and success in making converts by his book, I question not but that too will be true in the *event*.

But though here in the *epistle* he quite despairs, *without the least hopes of doing good*, yet in the *epilogue* he's a little more sanguine. For there he speaks of an *endeavour to do good*, which very endeavour has no place without some degree of hope. He advises there his patron to conceal the name of his *esquireship*, if he commits the book to the press. *For*, says he, *I think it virtue enough to* endeavour to do good *only within the bounds of doing yourself no harm*.[d] Now this is a true* atheistical *moral:* do good no further than you are sure not to lose by it; keep your dear person and interest out of *harm's* way. But the Christian institution supplied him once with nobler sentiments; in the practice of which the holy *apostles* and *martyrs* voluntarily† laid down their lives; a very odd sort of *priestcraft*. Nay, the heathen philosophy would have taught him more elevated thoughts, if he had not chosen for his *guide* (however he rails at all *guides*) the worst sect of all.

III.

By free-thinking, says he, *I mean, the use of the understanding, in endeavouring to find out the meaning of any proposition whatsoever, in considering the nature of the evidence for or against it, and in judging of it according to the seeming force or weakness of the evidence*.[e] Now we'll allow him, what he desires, that his definition is *extensive* enough; for it comprehends the whole herd of human race, even fools, madmen, and children; for they use what understanding they have, and judge as things seem; he has *extended* it so

[d] Pag. 178. [The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has "virtue enough, *in a country so ignorant, stupid, superstitious, and destitute of all private and public virtue, as ours*, to endeavour," &c. p. 149. The French translation has nearly the same turn, p. 261.—D.]

[* is a true; 1*st ed.* "is true."—D.]

[† voluntarily; *so* 1*st ed.*: *ed.* 1743, "voluntary."—D.]

[e] Pag. 5.

artfully and with logical justness, that in a definition of FREE-thinking there is not a syllable about *freedom*. 'Tis really no more than *think and judge as you find;* which every inhabitant of Bedlam practises every day, as much as any of our illustrious sect.

But perhaps I am mistaken; and the notion of *freedom* superadded to *thinking* may be implied in those two pronouns, *any whatsoever*. And then indeed the soberer part of mankind, who judge for themselves no further than their education has fitted them, are wholly excluded, and the *crackbrained* and *Bedlamites* are taken in. Oliver's porter,* as I have been told, would determine daily *de omni scibili;* and, if he had now been alive, might have had the first chair in this club. For a modern *free-thinker* is an universalist in speculation; *any* proposition *whatsoever* he's ready to decide; *every day de quolibet ente,*[f] as our author here *professes;* self-assurance supplies all want of abilities; he'll interpret (as you'll see presently) the Prophets and Solomon without Hebrew, Plutarch and Zosimus without Greek, and Cicero and Lucan without Latin.

The characteristic of this sect does not lie at all in the definition of *thinking*, but in stating the true meaning of their adjective FREE. Which in fact will be found to carry much the same notion as *bold, rash, arrogant, presumptuous,* together with a strong propension to the *paradox* and the *perverse*. For *free* with them has no relation at all to outward impediment or inhibition, (which they neither do nor can complain of, not with you in England I am sure,) but means an inward promptness and forwardness to decide about matters beyond the reach of their studies, in *opposition* to the rest of mankind. There is nothing plainer through his whole book, than that he himself makes singularity, whim,

[* The porter of Oliver Cromwell became insane, it is said, by studying books of mystical divinity, and was many years in Bedlam. He both preached and prophesied, and had his followers.—D.]

[f] Pag. 5. [" myself, who profess to *think freely* every day *de quolibet ente*."—D.]

and contradiction, to be the specific difference, and an essential part in the composition of a *free-thinker*. If Origen, Erasmus, Grotius, &c. chance to have any *nostrum* against the current of common doctrine, they are presently of his party, and he dubs them *free-thinkers;* in all the rest of their writings, where they fall in with the common opinions, they are discharged by him with ignominy; even proscribed as *unthinkers, half-thinkers,* and *enemies to free-thinking*. Why this unequal usage, unless he thinks *freedom of thought* to be then only exercised when it dissents and opposes? Has not the world for so many ages thought and judged *freely* on Euclid, and yet has assented to all his propositions? Is it not possible to have used the like *freedom*, and yet close in with the Apostles' Creed, our Confession, or your Articles? Surely I think as *freely* when I conclude my soul is immaterial, as the author does when he affirms his to be made of the same materials with that of a swine.

Another idea couched in their adjective FREE is jealousy, mistrust, and surmise. 'Tis a firm persuasion among them, that there are but two sorts in mankind, deceivers and deceived, cheats and fools. Hence it is, that, dreaming and waking, they have one perpetual theme, *priestcraft*. This is just like the opinion of Nero, *who believed for certain that every man was guilty of the same impurities that he was; only some were craftier than others to dissemble and conceal it.*[g] And the surmise in both cases must proceed from the same cause; either a very corrupt heart, or a crazy and crack-brained head, or, as it often happens, both.

IV.

This definition cannot, he conceives, *be excepted against by the enemies of* free-thinking, *as not including the* crime *with which they charge* free-thinkers, *in order to render them*

[g] *Suet. Ner.* c. 29. Ex nonnullis comperi, persuasissimum habuisse eum, neminem hominum pudicum, aut ulla corporis parte purum esse; verum plerosque dissimulare vitium, et calliditate obtegere.

odious to unthinking people.[h] His definition, as we have seen, includes nothing at all in it besides *thinking* and *judging;* there's nothing in it to describe *free,* which he left us to supply; and, as we find in the whole tenour of his book, that word does really *include* not one *crime* only, but many. Take the general definition, exclusive of the *crime,* and compare it with the title of his book, and the latter will be found either flat nonsense in itself, or a contradiction to the whole. *This Discourse,* says the title, *was occasioned by the* Rise *and* Growth *of a Sect called* Free-thinkers. Why, then, it had the stalest occasion that ever poor discourse had; for the *rise* of that *sect* (if the general definition constitutes it) is as early as the creation of Adam, or (in his scheme, who hints his willingness to believe *men before* Adam[i]) even much earlier than that. Nay, if we may guess at his creed from his poet Manilius,[j] the sect must have *risen* without any *rise,* and have its *growth* from all *eternity.* For whenever the species of man existed, 'tis most certain there must have been *free-thinkers,* as far as this *definition* goes. They began at once with the *free-breathers,* the *free-hearers,* and the *free-smellers;* and are every whit as numerous and populous as those are.

Again, pray consider the words *a* SECT *of free-thinkers:*

[h] Pag. 5.

[i] Pag. 160. ["A few instances," says Collins, "of his [Josephus's] *free-thinking* will not be unacceptable to the reader. He says (*Jewish Antiq.* l. i. c. 3. L'Estrange's *translation*), *That Cain, after a tedious journey through several countries, took up at length at Nais, and settled his abode: but was so far from mending upon his affliction, that he went rather from bad to worse, abandoning himself to all manner of outrage, without any manner of regard to common justice. He enriched himself by rapine and violence, and made choice of the most profligate of monsters for his companions, instructing them in the very mystery of their own profession. He corrupted the simplicity of former times with a novel invention of weights and measures, and exchanged the innocency of that primitive generosity and candour for the new tricks of policy and craft.* All which plainly supposes *men before* Adam." *Discourse,* pp. 159, 160.—The later 8vo ed. ibid. and the 12mo ed. p. 133, (see note, pp. 290, 1) give the conclusion of the passage thus, "All which *seems plainly to suppose men,*" &c. The French translation has, "En parlant ainsi *ne suppose-t-il pas évidemment,*" &c. p. 234.—D.]

[j] Pag. 151. [The passage of Manilius quoted by Collins is from lib. i. 522: "Omnia mortali mutantur lege creata," &c.—D.]

that is, a rope of sand, a sum of ciphers, a commonwealth of savages, where nobody governs nor nobody obeys;

Νομάδες, ἀκούει δ' οὐδὲν οὐδεὶς οὐδενός.*

SECT, *secta* or *disciplina*, is a company of persons agreeing in the same system of opinions and doctrines: the words have their derivation *a sectando et discendo, from following and learning;* as the Platonic sect followed the doctrine of Plato, the Peripatetic of Aristotle. Now a modern *free-thinker*, that professes he will neither *follow* nor *learn*, that renounces all *guides* and *teachers*, as either *crackbrained* or *cheats*, how can this unsociable animal be ever of a *sect?* 'tis a contradiction in terms, and a thorough piece of nonsense.

But surely the author had some meaning when he gave that title to his book. No doubt of it; and the book itself explains it. For under all this pretence to *free-thinking*, he and his friends have a set of principles and *dogmata*, to which he that will not *assent* and *consent* (I cannot say *oath and subscription* are required) shall be excluded the sect. That the soul is material and mortal, Christianity an imposture, the Scripture a forgery, the worship of God superstition, hell a fable, and heaven a dream, our life without providence, and our death without hope like that of asses and dogs, are parts of the glorious gospel of these truly *idiot evangelists*.[k] If all your *free-thinking* does not centre in these opinions, you shall be none of their family. Claim your right as long as you will upon the terms of the *definition;* plead that you have *thought freely*, impartially, and carefully upon all those propositions, and that in all of them *the force of evidence* has drawn you to the contrary side; protest against this foul play, that while they clamour about *free-thinking*, they themselves impose creeds and terms of communion; that the author, while he rails at all *guides*, obtrudes himself as a *guide* to others: all this shall avail you nothing; you shall never be incorporated into the *rising and growing sect*, till

[* Eurip. *Cycl.* 120.—D.]

[k] Pag. 90. [See Section xxxiii. of the *Remarks*.—D.]

you own that that's the only *free-thinking*, to *think* just as they do.

V.

He now proceeds, by five arguments, to prove every man's right to *free-thinking*, according to that *definition*: a very needless and useless labour; for no religion, nor sect, not the very papists, deny it. 'Tis as necessary to the rational mind as respiration is to the vital body. Without this, all religions that were, are, or may be, are equally commendable. Christianity itself depended on it at its first propagation: the Reformation was grounded upon it, and is maintained and supported upon the same bottom. We shall leave, therefore, his five arguments to prove what none deny; only make some *remarks* upon his ignorance and unfairness in several incidents that he has slid in by the by.

He runs a parallel between *free-thinking* and *free-painting*; which latter he laments is not more cultivated in Great Britain, and can never be brought to *perfection* there, unless *suitable encouragements* be given to *free-painters*, so as *numbers of men and many hands* may be employed and encouraged.[1] Now here is a pretty broad and palpable insinuation, that, by changing the terms of the parallel, is to hint to the public, that *a suitable encouragement should be given to free-thinkers*; so that more hands and heads may be invited to so meritorious a work. I could scarce have believed he would have shewn himself so soon. What, already offering at stipends, and salaries, and benefices for his sect? He more than once in his book grudges the great charge the public is at in providing for so many *priests*:* and what gainer would the public be, if it turned out the *Christian priests*, and with an equal or greater charge maintained *atheist preachers?* For really that would be the case; and the man has reason to

[1] Pag. 7.

[* "The charge alone, therefore, of supporting such a number of ecclesiastics is a great evil to society, though it should be supposed the ecclesiastics themselves were employed in the most innocent manner imaginable, viz. in mere *eating and drinking*." *Discourse*, p. 114.—D.]

put in for salaries betimes. For whenever atheism should be general and established, then even *Christianity* would become *free-thinking*. And, if provision was not settled for parochial lectures every week, the people would be apt to relapse again from the new national church. So that all that the public would save by the bargain is, to change the persons, not the expense; and, instead of the present possessors of the pulpit, to have an equal number of *reverend*, and *right reverend*, and *most reverend* preachers of atheism.

VI.

He affirms, that *time, labour, and numbers of hands*,[m] are necessary to bring *thinking* in any science whatever to tolerable perfection: the first notions will be rude and imperfect; time and maturity are required towards any degree of justness. Now, since the sect of *free-thinkers*, by his own account, is but now *rising and growing*, and the era of it is placed no earlier than your late Revolution,* you may take his own argument and word for it, that the *thoughts* in this discourse of his, for want of due maturation, are all crude and undigested. And really without his indication, *αὐτὸ δείξει*, the thing itself will speak so before I've done with his book. But, however, in the next generation, when more progress is made in *thinking*, and more numbers are come in, he seems to promise they will write better.

All sciences and arts, says he, *have a mutual relation, harmony, dependency, and connexion; and the just knowledge of any one cannot be acquired without the knowledge of all the rest*.[n] Weigh now this man's abilities in his own scale. He

[m] Pag. 7, 8.

[* "Great numbers of witches," says Collins, "have been almost annually executed in England from the remotest antiquity to the late Revolution; when upon the *liberty* given and taken to *think freely*, the devil's power visibly declined," &c. *Discourse*, p. 30.—D.]

[n] Pag. 8, 9. [Where, in a note, Collins quotes Cicero: "Omnes artes, quæ ad humanitatem pertinent, habent quoddam commune vinculum, et quasi cognatione quadam inter se continentur." *Pro Archia Poeta*.—D.]

declares he judges every day de quolibet ente;* and yet to every single *quodlibet* he acknowledges as necessary the whole circle of sciences. A very *Hudibras* in perfection; no nut is too hard for his teeth:

Nil intra est olea, nihil extra est in nuce duri.†

And yet this *great promiser*, with all the assistance of his club, perpetually betrays‡ a profound ignorance in all science, in all antiquity, and in the very languages it is conveyed in.

VII.

Homer's ILIAD he admires, *as the epitome of all arts and sciences.*° And by this now, one would guess he had read it in the original. Be it so: and when he hears there's an *Odysseïs* of Homer, he will read and admire that too. Well, where are the footsteps of this vast knowledge in Homer? Why, *for instance*, says he, *he could never have described, in the manner he has done,* a chariot or a chariot-wheel, *without the particular knowledge of a* coach-maker, *such knowledge being absolutely necessary to that description.* Here's your justness of thought! What, nothing less than a coach-*maker's* knowledge? would not a coach-*man's* have served the turn? At this rate our friend Homer (as poor and blind as some have thought him) was the ablest *Jack of all trades* that ever was in nature. Hippias the Elean,§ who preached and blazoned his arts at the Olympic games, that all his habit from head to foot, and every utensil for his house, was made with his own hands, was an *idiot evangelist*‖ to him. For by the same rule, when Homer describes a ship under sail, he had the *particular knowledge* both of a *ship-carpenter* and a *pilot:* when he describes the *well-booted Greeks,* and several sorts of *shields* and *sandals,* he had the *particular knowledge* of

[* See note, p. 297.—D.]

[† Hor. Epist. ii. 1. 31.—Vulgo "*oleam:*" see Bentl. ad l.—D.]

[‡ betrays; 1*st ed.* "bewrays."—D.] ° Pag. 9.

[§ "Voyez entre autres Apulée, Florid. lib. ii." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 32.—D.]

[‖ See Sect. xxxiii. of the *Remarks.*—D.]

Tychius, σκυτοτόμων ἄμμιγα πάντων,* *the very prince of all shoemakers.* And yet I am apt to fancy, if our author had no better an artist than the old poet for his shoes, he would be as sorry a *free-walker* as he is now a *free-thinker.*

To prove Homer's universal knowledge *a priori,* our author says, *He designed his poem for eternity, to please and instruct mankind.*[p] Admirable again: *eternity* and *mankind:* nothing less than all ages and all nations were in the poet's foresight. Though our author vouches that he *thinks every day de quolibet ente,* give me leave to except Homer; for he never seems to have thought of him or his history. Take my word for it, poor Homer, in those circumstances and early times, had never such aspiring thoughts. He wrote a sequel of songs and rhapsodies, to be sung by himself for small earnings and good cheer, at festivals and other days of merriment; the *Ilias* he made for the men, and the *Odysseïs* for the other sex. These loose songs were not collected together in the form of an epic poem till Pisistratus's time, above† 500 years after. Nor is there one word in Homer that presages or promises immortality to his work; as we find there is in the later poets, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Lucan, and Statius. He no more thought, at that time, that his *poems* would be *immortal,* than our *free-thinkers* now believe their *souls* will; and the proof of each will be only *a parte post;* in the event, but not in the expectation.

VIII.

The BIBLE, says he, *is the most miscellaneous book in the world, and treats of the greatest variety of things; creation, deluge, chronology, civil laws, ecclesiastical institutions, nature, miracles, buildings, husbandry, sailing, physics, pharmacy, mathematics, metaphysics,* and *morals.*[q] Agreed; and what is his inference from this? Why, *free-thinking* is therefore

[* *Iliad.* vii. 221.—D.]

[p] Pag. 9. [In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) "his poem, *which now to all eternity will* please," &c. p. 6.—D.]

[† above; 1*st ed.* "about."—D.]

[q] Pag. 10, 11.

necessary; *for to understand the matter of this book, and to be master of the whole, a man must be able to think justly in every science and art.* Very true! and yet all he has here said of his sciences, is requisite were your English Bible supposed to be the very original. Add therefore to all the requisites here enumerated a sufficient skill in the Hebrew and Greek languages. Now pass your verdict on the man from his own evidence and confession. *To understand the Bible,* says he, *requires all sciences;* and two *languages* besides, say I. But it's plain from his book that he has already condemned the whole Bible for a forgery and imposture. Did he do it without *understanding the matter* of it? That's too scandalous for him to own. We must take it, then, that he professes himself accomplished in all *sciences* and *arts,* according to his own rule.

*Quid tulit hic tanto dignum promissor hiatu?**

Where has he or any of his sect shewn any tolerable skill in *science?* What dark passages of *Scripture* have they cleared, or of any book whatever? Nay, to remit to him his *sciences* and *arts,* what have they done in the *languages,* the shell and surface, of *Scripture?* A great *master of the whole Bible* indeed, that can scarce step three lines in the easiest classic author produced by himself without a notorious blunder!

IX.

Among the absurdities that follow from not thinking freely, he mentions that of the *pagans, who,* he says, *suppose* GOD *to be like an ox, or a cat, or a plant.*[r] Our author means the Egyptians; and it's plain here, from the next clause, that he puts GOD under the present *idea* and known attributes of that name, as Christians now conceive it. A rare judge in antiquity, and fit to decide about Scripture! The matter is no more than this. The Egyptians, who chiefly lived upon

[* "Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu?" Hor. *Ar. P.* 138.—D.]

[r] Pag. 13.

husbandry, declared by law that all those animals which were useful to agriculture, or destroyers of vermin, should be *holy, sacred,* and *inviolable;* so that it was death to kill any of them, either designedly or by chance.[s] These they considered as instruments of Divine Providence towards the support of human life; and without that view they consecrated none.[t] So that it was only a civil and political worship in the legislators, and had very little of sacred even among the vulgar. This is plain from what Diodorus[u] says, *that they paid the same honours to them when dead as when alive.** But our author's conception here is really so *absurd* and so monstrous, that the silliest pagan in all Egypt would have been ashamed of him. For, according to his notion and the present meaning of the word GOD, they declared it death by law to *kill* an *immortal* and *omnipotent* cat; and decreed divine honours to it after its *immortality* and deity was *dead.* When *thinking* is by longer time come to some perfection in the sect, they will learn, perhaps, that the objects of worship in paganism and polytheism had not all the attributes, nay generally not *one* of them, that we now by advances in science and thought justly ascribe to God; and they may have the pleasure of insulting several of the clergy that have wrong stated the notion of heathen idolatry. In the mean time I'll recommend to him one thought, when he's disposed to *think de quolibet ente;* what divine attributes

[s] *Herodotus in Euterpe.* [c. 65.—D.]

[t] *Cicero de Nat. Deor.* I. [c. 36. ed. Dav.—D.] Ægyptii nullam belluam, nisi ob aliquam utilitatem quam ex ea caperent, consecraverunt.

[u] *Diod.* lib. I. [t. i. p. 93. ed. Wessel.—D.] Σέβονται ἔνια τῶν ζώων Αἰγύπτιοι, ... οὐ ζῶντα μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τελευτήσαντα.

[* "Il est bien vrai que les autres nations ont accusé les Egyptiens d'avoir adoré comme dieux les animaux, les plantes, &c. Quand il n'y en auroit d'autres preuves que la Satire xv. de Juvénal, dans les 10 ou 12 prémiers vers, c'en seroit assez pour n'en pouvoir douter. Mais les Egyptiens ne convenoient pas du fait, et leur idée étoit celle qu'exprime ici Mr. Bentley, selon l'observation qu'en a faite J. Ger. Vossius, de Theol. Gentil. et Physiol. Christiana, lib. ix. cap. 14." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 39.—D.]

the Egyptians thought of, when they worshipped, as good authors* assure us, *crepitum ventris*.

X.

But the most ancient fathers of the church were as bad as his Egyptians; *for they*, says he, *no less absurdly supposed* GOD *to be material*.[v] And you are to *suppose* he's a droll here when he says, *no less absurdly;* for, if I wholly mistake not the cabbala of his sect, he himself *supposes* either GOD to be *material*, or not to be at all. With a few of the fathers† the matter stands thus: they believed the attributes of God, his infinite power, wisdom, justice, and goodness, in the same extent as we do; but his essence, no more than we can now, they could not discover. The Scriptures, they saw, called him *spiritus, spirit;* and the human soul *anima, breath:* both which in their primitive sense mean *aerial matter;* and all the words that the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin of old, or any tongue now or hereafter can supply, to denote the substance of *God* or *soul*, must either be thus metaphorical, or else merely negative, as *incorporeal* or *immaterial*. This, when he is in a mood for *thinking*, he will

[* "Ces *bons auteurs* sont des pères. Minucius Felix, par exemple, qui dit, cap. 28, pag. 167, ed. Cantab. 1707. *Iidem Ægyptii... non ... Serapidem magis quam strepitus per pudenda corporis expressos contremiscunt.*" AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 40.— See the notes of the commentators on this passage of M. Felix.—D.]

[v] Pag. 13. [The later 8vo ed. of the *Discourse*, ibid. (see note, p. 291) and the 12mo ed. p. 9, have "*some of* the most ancient fathers;" and so the French translation, "*quelques-uns*," p. 18.—D.]

[† "Je me contenterai d'en citer, pour l'exemple, ce seul passage si beau de St. Théophile d'Antioche, dans son i. livre *ad Autolyc.* ch. v. Ἐρεῖς οὖν μοι· σὺ ὁ βλέπων, διήγησαί μοι τὸ εἶδος τοῦ θεοῦ. ἄκουε, ὦ ἄνθρωπε· τὸ μὲν εἶδος τοῦ θεοῦ ἄῤῥητον, καὶ ἀνέκφραστον, καὶ μὴ δυνάμενον ὀφθαλμοῖς σαρκίνοις ὁραθῆναι. δόξῃ γάρ ἐστιν ἀχώρητος, μεγέθει ἀκατάληπτος, ὕψει ἀπεριγράπτου, ἰσχύι ἀσύγκριτος, σοφίᾳ ἀσυμβίβαστος, ἀγαθοσύνῃ ἀμίμητος, καλοποιΐᾳ ἀνεκδιήγητος, &c. ..... Chap. vi. Ἄναρχος δέ ἐστιν, ὅτι ἀγέννητός ἐστιν· ἀναλλοίωτος δὲ, καθότι ἀθάνατός ἐστι. ..... Pour éviter la multitude des citations, j'imiterai Mr. Wolfius dans sa note sur ce prémier endroit de Théophile, et renvoierai aux sources qu'il y indique. On peut le consulter." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 41.—D.]

find to be necessary *a priori*, for want of *ideas*. What wonder, then, if in those early times (for he knows *it's by gradual progress in thinking that men arrive at full knowledge*[w]) some fathers believed that the divine substance was *matter* or *body*,* especially while the very notion of *body* was undefined and unfixt, and was† extensive as *thing?*‡ Was this such a shame in a few fathers,§ while the Stoics, not a *rising* and *growing*, but a *flourishing* sect at that time, maintained *qualities* and *passions*, *virtues* and *vices*, *arts* and *sciences*, nay *syllogisms* and *solecisms* to be *bodies?*‖ But the real shame

[w] Pag. 8.

[* "Ce sentiment étoit celui de Tertullien, lib. de Car. Christi, cap. xi. *Omne quod est, corpus est sui generis. Nihil est incorporale, nisi quod non est.* . . . Et dans son livre contre Praxeas, chap. vii. *Quis negabit Deum corpus esse, etsi Deus spiritus est? Spiritus enim corpus sui generis in sua effigie.* . . . . . Je ne connois point d'autre père qui se soit exprimé d'une manière si crue. Aussi Hobbes, qui dans son *Leviathan* ne reconnoit de substance que celle qui est corps, ne se défend que par la seule autorité de Tertullien, App. c. 3." Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 43.—D.]

[† was; 1*st ed.* "was as."—D.]

[‡ "Ceci me paroît ne devoir s'entendre que de Tertullien en particulier. Car il est vrai que dans son langage et dans ses idées, les termes de *corpus* et de *res* . . . . . étoient synonymes. On le voit très clairement, dans les paroles qui précèdent immédiatement celles que je viens de citer dans son livre *de Car. Christi*, au chap. xi. *Sed nec esse quidem potest, nisi habeat per quod sit. Cum autem sit, habeat necesse est aliquid, per quod est. Si habet aliquid per quod est, hoc erit corpus ejus.* . . . . Mais je ne connois à toute rigueur ni philosophe, ni père, à l'exception de celui-ci, qui se soit exprimé de la sorte." Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 44.—D.]

[§ "J'ai déjà remarqué, que Tertullien est le seul père que ceci regarde. Car je ne pense pas qu'on doive mettre en ligne de compte les anciens Anthropomorphites, auxquels on ne donne jamais le nom de pères. Il me semble donc que Mr. Bentley auroit pu répondre en un mot à l'auteur du *Discours*, &c. qu'il y avoit de la mauvaise-foi à débiter sous le nom de *quelques-uns des plus anciens pères de l'église*, le sentiment et les expressions d'un seul de ces pères. Au reste, ce que Mr. Bentley allègue pour excuser Tertullien, est la vérité toute pure; aussi St. Augustin lui-même l'avoit-il observé, dans son livre de *Hæres. ad Quodvultdeum.* Hæres. 86. *Posset enim quoquo modo putari ipsam naturam substantiamque divinam corpus vocare* . . . . . *quia non est nihil, non est inanitas.*" Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 44.—D.]

[‖ "On peut consulter là-dessus le vii. livre de Diogène Laërce. Il paroît par le chap. 56. qu'un axiome des Stoïciens alloit nécessairement là. Πᾶν γὰρ τὸ ποιοῦν, σῶμά ἐστιν, disoient-ils . . . . . Ainsi la voix étoit elle-même un

is, that in these brighter days of knowledge, when *matter* and *motion* have been thoroughly considered, and all the powers of *mechanism* discussed and stated, our author and his sect should still contend, both in discourse and in print, *that their souls are material.** This they do with such zeal, as if they should be great gainers by the victory. And, by my consent, let's close with them upon the debate. Let them put a previous question, whether there are in mankind different species of souls? Let this once pass in the affirmative; and their souls shall be allowed as corporeal and brutal as their opinions, writings, and lives seem to represent them.

XI.

His next effort is a retail of some popish doctrines and rites, *infallibility, image-worship, and relics,*[x] which our church and yours have along ago rejected. What's this then to the purpose? or what plea to the present *free-thinkers* in England? Nay, he owns we are now rid of these absurdities, and by whose labour and cost. They obtained, says he, almost universally, *till the thinking of a few, some whereof sacrificed their lives by so doing, gave a new turn to the Christian world.*[y] This is manifestly meant of the first re-

corps, et par conséquent tout ce qui étoit opéré par la voix étoit aussi corporel, sans en excepter les *syllogismes* et les *barbarismes*. § 59. Menage, dans ses notes sur le chapitre 55, cite divers auteurs qui attribuent aux Stoïciens le sentiment que tout est corporel, en y comprenant Dieu lui-même. Origène est formel sur ce dernier article, *ad Cels.* lib. i. p. 17. ed. Cant. 1677. Οἱ σῶμα εἰπόντες τὸν θεὸν Στωϊκοί: sur quoi l'on peut consulter Spencer. Leur sentiment ne diffèroit donc que pour la forme, de celui des Epicuriens, que Lucrèce exprime en ces mots, [i.] vers 420 et suivans:

Omnis, ut est, igitur, per se natura, duabus
Consistit rebus: nam corpora sunt, et inane, &c."

AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 45.—D.]

[* "Ceci regarde singulièrement Jean Toland, grand ami et même comme le précepteur en Déisme de Mr. Collins. On sait que la 2. de ses *Lettres à Serena* a pour but d'établir la matérialité de l'âme." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 46.—D.]

[x] Pag. 13. [y] Pag. 14.

formers, and particularly those of England, who for freedom of thinking laid down their lives;

*Atque animas pulchra pro libertate dederunt.**

'Twas by the price and purchase of their blood that this author and his sect have at this day, not only the liberty, but the power, means, and method of thinking; for, together with religion, all arts and sciences then raised up their heads, and both were brought about by the same persons. And yet this very honest and grateful sect involves those very *priests*, to whom they are indebted for all things, in the common crime with those that murdered them; nay, with Talapoins, Bonzes, Pawawers, and who not;

For priests of all religions are the same.†

But some of the *fathers* again displease him; for they were too severe and rigorous for men of his genius; they disallowed[z] *self-defence*,‡ *second marriages*,§ and *usury*.‖ An error sure on the right hand, which shews they had not the *priestcraft* of Pope Pius the Fifth.[a] And yet here, with

[* Is this line formed for the occasion? See Virg. *Æn.* vi. 822.—D.]

[† Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, part i. 99.—D.]

[z] Pag. 14.

[‡ "Grotius a rassemblé quelques-uns des passages des pères qui condamnent la défense de soi-même. Dr. de la G. et de la Paix, liv. i. ch. 3. On y trouve St. Ambroise, St. Augustin, et St. Basile." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 49.—D.]

[§ "Voyez parmi les *canons* attribués aux apôtres, celui qui est le xii. des Grecs, ou le xvii. des Latins, et la note de Cotelier là-dessus." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 49.—D.]

[‖ "Gratien, dans son *Decret*, caus. xiv. quest. 3. et 4. a recueilli les passages de divers pères ou conciles qui ont interdit l'usure. Voy. aussi Mr. Barbeyrac, dans ses notes sur Grotius du Dr. de la G. et de la Paix, liv. ii. ch. xii. 20." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 49.—D.]

[a] Pag. 117. ["Pope Pius V." says Collins, (quoting in a note *Confes. Cath. de Sancy*, liv. i. c. 1.) "confessed this *secret* of *supporting a church*, when, upon hearing that the Protestants were in earnest against *adultery* and *fornication*, he said, *If they will not allow of such kind of sport in their religion, it will never be of any long duration.*" The 12mo ed. (see note, p. 291) has, "Pope Pius V. *shewed that he well understood* this *secret*," &c. p. 96. The French translation gives, "Le Pape *Sixte* V fit bien connoître qu'il n'ignoroit pas," &c. p. 173.—D.]

his usual accuracy, he lays those things wide and in common, which were pressed upon the clergy only,* but in the laity connived at. It is a crime too in the fathers, that *antipodes* were not sooner demonstrated, nor the *earth's motion about the sun*.[b] Very well; but pray who were the persons that gave new light into† these matters?‡ All hearty professors and practisers of religion, and among them several *priests*.§ All these things were discovered and perfected before this new club had its *rise;* nor is there the least branch of science that any of their members either invented or improved.

XII.

But now we have him for ten pages[c] together with image and allegory; *free-seeing* is substituted for *free-thinking*, and a *confession of eye-sight faith* for a *Christian creed;* and then

[* "Il me paroît que ceci ne se peut dire, à toute rigueur, de tous les pères et de tous les conciles qui interdirent autrefois ces trois choses. Les autorités recueillies par Grotius *ubi supr.* contre la défense de soi-même, sont absolues, et regardent en commun tous les Chrétiens. Quant aux secondes noces, tout le monde sait que Tertullien les a condamnées, comme autant d'adultères; mais comme St. Augustin a rejetté cette rigueur sur son *Montanisme*, il est bon d'observer qu'il y a d'autres pères qui ne se sont pas exprimés avec beaucoup plus de douceur. Je ne citerai qu'Athenagoras Leg. pro Christ. c. 28. p. 130. ed. Ox. 1706. ἢ οἷος τὶς ἐτέχθη, μένειν, ἢ ἐφ' ἑνὶ γάμῳ, ὁ γὰρ δεύτερος εὐπρεπὴς ἐστι μοιχεία. . . . . Voy. les Comment. *in loc.* Il en est de même par rapport à l'usure." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 50.—D.]

[b] Pag. 14. ["To maintain there were *antipodes* was *heresy;* and Galileus, even in the last age, was imprisoned for asserting the motion of the earth."—D.]

[† into; 1*st ed.* "in."—D.]

[‡ "Il y eut autrefois des philosophes qui crurent qu'il y a des antipodes, et que la terre tourne autour du soleil. Sur le 1[r] de ces deux articles on peut consulter Pline, dans son Hist. Nat. liv. ii. c. 65; et quant au 2[d] on n'ignore pas qu'au rapporte d'Aristote, De Cœlo, lib. ii. c. 13, Pythagore croyoit que notre terre n'est qu'une des planètes qui se meuvent autour du soleil. Mais bien que ces sentiments ne soient pas nouveaux, il n'en est pas moins vrai que les démonstrations sont nouvelles." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 51.—D.]

[§ "L'Angleterre seule a fourni un grand nombre d'ecclésiastiques qui se sont distingués dans l'étude de l'astronomie. Parmi ceux-là je ne saurois presque douter que Mr. Bentley n'ait eu singulièrement en vue l'illustre Wilkins, mort Evêque de Chester en 1672," &c. AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 52.—D.]

[c] Pag. 15 to 25.

in a tedious parallel the several juggles of *Hocus Pocus* make the emblem of *priestcraft*. Argument in all this you are to expect none, there's no occasion for that: for illustration, similitude, comparison, especially when turned to ridicule and distorted into farce, do the business much better; and, as I have been told, work wonders for the *growing sect*, and make converts to admiration.

Suppose, says he, a set of men should fancy it was absolutely necessary to the peace of society, or to some other great purpose, to hinder and prevent *free-seeing*, and to impose a creed, and confession, and standard of *eye-sight faith*. These men, says he, must either be madmen or designing knaves; and what methods would they take? They would draw articles in flat contradiction to plain *sight*; require subscription, and forbid opposition to them; explain, paraphrase, and comment upon them; settle pensions and salaries for those that preach and propagate them; traduce, punish, and persecute to the utmost all that disagree to them.

Now under this image you are to understand *Christianity*, and all *religion* whatever; for our author is playing *Hocus Pocus* in the very similitude he takes from that juggler, and would slip upon you, as he phrases it, a *counter* for a *groat*.* The true meaning of it is this: SUPPOSE *that religion was first contrived, either by the priesthood for lucre, or by the magistrate for easy government.* Why truly, if we SUPPOSE it to be a sham, we *do* suppose it a sham. A wonderful

[* "So that I will suppose among the various and contradictory forms of *confession* [*of eye-sight faith*], which men of different whims, or of different interests and designs, will make at different times, *one* to consist of these following *articles*:

That a ball can go through a table:
That two balls may be made out of one little one:
That a stone can be made to vanish out of sight:
That a knot can be undone with words:
That a thread may be burnt to pieces, and made whole with the ashes:
That one face may be a hundred or a thousand:
And lastly, *That a counter may be turned into a groat.*"

Discourse, p. 17, where a note on these *articles* refers the reader to "Hocus Pocus Jun. p. 13, 15, 36, 43, 45, 47."—D.]

argument, and a mighty advance. Does he detain us in so many nauseating pages, and all along beg the question? A most formidable man this for thought and demonstration!

XIII.

Well, but he'll shew instances of religious juggle in the *oracular temples or churches of the pagans.*[d] Pray mind the emphatic words, *or churches,* and admire the author's penetration and discretion. For without that prudent explication, *temples* perhaps in your language might have been misunderstood, and mistaken for *inns of court.* These temples, he says, were contrived with many caverns and holes to produce fearful noises, and furnished with machines for the priests to act their parts in. And pray who taught him all this? is it not chiefly, and almost solely, to be learnt from the *Christian fathers?* Does not he own that the Christians, as well as Epicureans, were chased away by those priests, before they would pronounce any oracles?[e] And yet thorough this whole book, by a worse trick than *Hocus Pocus,** the Christians are charged with the very frauds that they either only or chiefly have discovered.

But now for a† specimen of his learning again, which he sprinkles by the way. *It was universally believed,* says he, *among ordinary people, that the gods themselves came down from heaven, and eat of the repasts which the priests prepared for them at the people's expense:*[f] and again in the next page,

[d] Pag. 19. [The later editions of the *Discourse* in English (see note, p. 291) shew no alteration in this passage. The French translation has "les temples consacrés à ces oracles étoient bâtis," &c. p. 28, without a corresponding word to "churches."—D.]

[e] Pag. 20. He had it out of Lucian's Alexander. Ἔξω Ἐπικούρειοι, ἔξω Χριστιανοί. [*Opp.* t. ii. p. 245. ed. Hemst.—D.]

[* See note, p. 312.—D.]

[† now for a; 1*st ed.* "now a."—D.]

[f] Pag. 19. [In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291), immediately before this passage we find the following addition: "*In some places the priests made the people believe they saw heaven just over their heads; and that when it rained hard, the gods opened the windows of heaven, and poured the rain down upon*

that the gods came down to eat upon earth. Now did not I guess right that, for all his fine panegyric upon the *Ilias* of Homer,[g] he was little or not at all acquainted with that poem? For if he were, he would have learnt from thence, that in the heathen notion the *gods* could not *eat upon earth*, nor devour human *repasts*:

Οὐ γὰρ σῖτον ἔδουσ', οὐ πίνουσ' αἴθοπα οἶνον,
Τοὔνεκ' ἀναίμονές εἰσι, καὶ ἀθάνατοι καλέονται.[h]

Whence, therefore, had our learned author this bold assertion of *universal belief?* Even from *Bel and the Dragon*:* and what *his mother* once taught him there, he ascribes to paganism in common. The real matter is no more than this: when a heathen priest slew a victim, he had no more of it for his share than law and custom allowed; scarce worth the labour of butchering: the entrails and most useless parts were burnt on the altar; and the best of the victim was carried home to the sacrificer's house, to be feasted on by his family and friends; and if the priest was invited too as a guest, it was a work of supererogation. Nor did the most credulous believe that gods came down and devoured *flesh*; nor was any such *repast* set apart for them. If any victuals was so set, either in temples or the open streets, it was well known that the sweepers of the fanes got the first, and the poor of the town the latter. All they believed in relation to the gods, besides the piety and the prayers, was only, that the steam of the burnt sacrifice ascended up to heaven, and delighted, or, if you will, fed the gods. This Homer would have told him too, that *libation* and *steam* were† the only share the gods had in any offering:

them; and that the smoke of burnt sacrifices ascended thither, fed the gods, and was a sweet savour in their nostrils. In other places, agreeably to the same supposition of the nearness of heaven, they persuaded them that the gods themselves came down," &c. p. 14. And so the French translation, p. 29.—D.]

[g] Pag. 9. [h] Iliad. ε. v. 341.

[* "About all these matters the people were to have a faith, which *free-seeing* would have destroyed; and that would have rendered the priests as contemptible as Daniel did the *priests* of Bel," &c. *Discourse*, p. 20.—D.]

[† were; 1*st ed.* "was."—D.]

Λοιβῆς τε κνίσσης τε, τὸ γὰρ λάχομεν γέρας ἡμεῖς.[i]

Whence Aristophanes, in his play called *The Birds*, makes a city to be built in the air, on purpose to stop all intercourse between heaven and earth, *that no smoke from sacrifices should ascend to the gods;* and presently Prometheus is introduced bringing the news, *that the gods were almost starved, having not had one particle of* steam *since Nephelococcygia was built.* 'Tis true, indeed, there was another notion, that the gods often came down from heaven in human shape,[j] to inquire into the actions of men; and so, like strangers and pilgrims, were unawares entertained, and (seemingly) eat and drank with their hosts. But this is nothing to the *priests*, nor to the assertion of the author; who no doubt will anon be found a most subtle interpreter of Solomon and the prophets, after he has been so miserably imposed on by that silly and spurious book, *Bel and the Dragon.*

XIV.

After a few threadbare narratives about the Armenian, Greek, and popish priests, the *miraculous flame* at Jerusalem, and the melting *blood* at Naples, he has his fling at us Lutherans. *The Lutheran priests*, says he, *contrary to the testimony of men's senses, make their followers believe that the body and blood of Christ are superadded to the bread and wine:*[k] which he parallels with an old story as lewd as it is vulgar. Now, though I am more concerned in this *remark* than many others, for the particular honour of our church, I design not to launch out in a vindication of our doctrine, which this scribbler understands no more than he did that of

[i] Iliad. δ. v. 49. [j] Odyss. ρ. v. 485.

[k] Pag. 25. [In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291), Collins has added, "*Nor are those priests who pretend that men eat and drink the body and blood of Christ verily and indeed by faith in the Lord's supper, less absurd or less guilty of imposing on the senses of the people.*" p. 19. The same addition is found in the French translation, where the latter part of the passage quoted by Bentley is rendered, "que le corps et le sang de Christ sont *cachés sous* le pain et le vin." p. 38.—D.]

the Egyptians.* You know something of the university of Leipsic; we are reputed the greatest *latitudinarians* and *free-thinkers* of our sect, not near so stiff and rigid as those of Wittenberg or Jene; and yet I'll tell this author, if he had published his wretched libel with us, without any instigation from the priests, the magistrate would soon have taken care of him, either in a prison or a dark room. What his reception will be in England, I pretend not to guess. You have a glorious liberty there, the parent of many noble books, which under a less freedom of thought would never have been wrote. And it's that novelty of notions that makes the product of the English press so inquired after here. But I fear the outrageous license of this author and others of his stamp will in time have an unexpected effect, and oblige your government to abridge all of that good freedom which these have so much abused. And then we foreigners of curiosity, when we shall see nothing come from Britain but stanch and staple postils, must curse the impious memory of this writer and his whole tribe.

XV.

Tantamne rem tam negligenter? The question he proposes to consider is no less than this, *Whether the Christian religion is founded on divine revelation?*[1] This he resolves to examine and determine *by himself*. And we may easily foresee what the sentence will be under so ignorant and corrupt a judge. Nay, his book sufficiently shews he has given his verdict already, and resolved that darkness is brighter and more desirable than light. Let us bestow a few reflections on his conduct; for, for all his noise about speculation *in general*, this question is the whole affair and business, the whole compass and sphere of modern FREE-THINKING.

What in common life would denote a man rash, foolhardy, hair-brained, opiniatre, crazed, is recommended in this scheme as the true method in speculation. Are you dangerously sick? you will call an able physician. Is your

[* See p. 305.—D.]

[1] Pag. 26.

estate threatened and attacked? you'll consult the best lawyer. But have you an affair upon your hands, wherein your very soul and being and all eternity lie at stake? (— *Neque enim . . . ludicra petuntur Præmia**) why there you are to seek no help, but confide in your own abilities. That is, if you have a very deep and broad river to pass, scorn to ask for cork or bladders; flounce in and hazard all, though you have never learnt to swim.

This rational author (p. 107) puts the same objection to himself: and he notably answers it thus; *A man,* says he, *of no profession may have as much law, physic, and divinity as any sergeant or doctor of them all:* and then with a Quaker's story out of his friend Mr. Le Clerc, he declares that to be a *happy country, a very paradise,* where none of those three *professions* is admitted.† And who doubts but in this reply there's as much sense as good manners?

But for all this author's great skill in *physic* and *law,* he'll hardly make himself sick on purpose, or bring on a trial against his own estate, to shew his great abilities. Why then will he needlessly and voluntarily run a risk for his soul and salvation? and fool-hardily put his head under a weight that may crush him to death? The strange difference in this conduct, when examined to the bottom, will open the whole mystery of *free-thinking* and *atheism.*

'Tis plain, a man that is born in a Christian country, if he is a just and good man, has no interest to wish that religion false. The moral precepts fall in with his own opinion and choice; no restraints are laid upon him but what out of paternal affection he would forbid his own son. No foreign religion, much less the atheistic scheme, threaten him with

[* Virg. *Æn.* xii. 764.—D.]

[† "And this puts me in mind of a passage of Mr. Le Clerc's late *Bibliothèque Choisie,* tom. 25, p. 130. A gentleman asked a proprietor of New Jersey in America (where there are few inhabitants besides Quakers), whether they had any lawyers among them? then, whether they had any physicians? and lastly, whether they had any priests? To all which the proprietor answered in order, no. O happy country! replies the gentleman, that must be a paradise." *Discourse,* p. 108.—D.]

any danger, should he be here in an error. He's as safe as those that differ from him, were he really in the wrong. But then if it be true, what glorious promises and rewards! not superior only to other schemes, but beyond all human wishes. The speculative doctrines in it (which affect the main chance) are very few and easy. If his education has enabled him for't, he'll examine them and the whole grounds of faith, and find them true to his satisfaction and comfort. If he's engaged in active and busy life, he will acquiesce in the judgments of those who have better means and leisure to know them.

Thus it is, will be, and must be, while men lead such virtuous lives as entitle them to the *promises* of religion. And were there not equal *threats* in it on the other hand, were it all heaven without any hell, there would not be one atheist, unless *crack-brained*, in Christendom. I positively affirm, that no man in his senses, educated in our holy religion, ever did or could fall from it to atheism, till, by considering his own actions and designs, he despaired of the promises of Christianity, and looked upon it with fear and terror.

In that case indeed, and in that alone, out of uneasiness of mind, they wish all religion was false; and that's the original of modern *free-thinking*. Then they ransack all impious books for objections against it; they are biased in their favour; a single ounce in that scale buoys up a hundred in the other. Pagans, Mahometans, Pawawers, and Talapoins, are all good vouchers against Christianity. All that's said by Christians (and who else must speak for them) is suspected for craft and design. And the very ignorance of these *free-thinkers* does them more service than knowledge. For who can deal with an *ignoramus*, that is warpt by his inclination, fixt there by his conceitedness, jealous of all contrary instruction, and uncapable of seeing the force of it?

That this is the very case of our author and those of his club, is pretty notorious. Inquire closely into their lives, and there you will find the true reason why they clamour

against religion. For, when they have settled themselves in atheism, they are then elevated with *joy* and *mirth*, as if they had obtained a great conquest. Now this is wholly unnatural, unless religion is viewed by them as the greatest of terrors. What! rejoice that we have lost immortality, and must die like the beasts? Utterly impossible! all the springs of human passions resist and refute it. Misery at that rate may excite laughter, and prosperity tears; indignation may raise love, and complacency revenge. But if once heaven is desponded of, and hell opens its horrible mouth, then indeed *mountains are desired to cover us*, and the thoughts of destruction or annihilation may really produce *joy*.

This, I say again, is the true origin of *free-thinking*, and not the force of any objections against the truth of Christianity: and, as a proof, I appeal to this very book. For no doubt the writer has couched in it the strongest objections he was master of. And yet those are so old and stale, that if they could have any operation, Christianity would have been extinct above a thousand years ago. Well! but they had influence upon him, and would have so upon others, if fear and force were removed, and men left at free liberty. So far from that; so far is our author from seeing deeper into those objections than others before him, that, as I'll presently prove, he understands not the mere grammatical sense, much less the application and import of any old passage he cites.

XVI.

It's the great benefit, says he, of *free-thinking*, that the supposed power of the devil in *possessions* and *witchcraft* has visibly declined in England since a liberty to think freely has been given and taken there.[m] A quaint conceit indeed, and very far-fetched. So that you in Great Britain owe it to this *rising sect*, that you have not so many prosecutions of *witches* as formerly. This is Thraso again exactly:

[m] Pag. 29. [30.—See the passage given in the words of Collins, note, p. 302. —D.]

Labore alieno magno partam gloriam
*Verbis in sese transmovet, qui habet salem.**

I do not think any English priest will or need affirm in general, that there are now no real instances of sorcery or witchcraft; especially while you have a public law, which they neither enacted nor procured, declaring those practices to be felony. But I must needs say, that while I sojourned among you, I observed fewer of the clergy give in to particular stories of that kind than of the commonalty or gentry.† In the dark times before the Reformation (not because they were popish, but because unlearned), any extraordinary disease attended with odd symptoms, strange ravings or convulsions, absurd eating or egestion, was out of ignorance of *natural* powers ascribed to *diabolical*. This superstition was universal, from the cottages to the very courts: nor was it ingrafted by priestcraft, but is implanted in human nature: no nation is exempted from it; not our author's *paradise* of New Jersey,‡ where no *priests* have yet footing: if§ the next ages become unlearned, that superstition will, I will not say return, but spring up anew. What then has lessened in England your stories of sorceries? Not the *growing sect*, but the growth of philosophy and medicine. No thanks to atheists, but to the Royal Society and College of Physicians, to the Boyles and Newtons, the Sydenhams and Ratcliffs. When the people saw the diseases they had imputed to witchcraft quite cured by a course of physic, they too were cured of their former error: they learned truth by the *event*, not by a false position *a priori*, that there was

[* Ter. *Eun.* iii. 1, 9. Vulgo "Verbis *sæpe* in *se* tr."—D.]

[† In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) is the following additional note: "I desire I may not be so far mistaken in what I here say, as to be supposed to charge either the clergy of England in general, or even the reverend actors and under-actors at the late Hertford trial, with the belief of sorcery or witchcraft. On the contrary, I agree with Phileleutherus Lipsiensis, one of my answerers, who says *that fewer of the clergy* (in conversation with one another) *give in to particular stories of that kind than of the commonalty or gentry.*" p. 24. The same note is found in the French translation, p. 49.—D.]

[‡ See note, p. 317.—D.] [§ if; 1*st ed.* "and if."—D.]

neither witch, devil, nor God. And then as to the frauds and impostures in this way, they have most of them been detected by the *clergy*, whom our writer here wickedly libels as complices and parties in them. The two strongest books I have read on this subject were both written by *priests*: the one by Dr. Becker in Holland,* and the other by a doctor of your own, whose name I've forgot, that was afterwards Archbishop of York.†

XVII.

We are now come to his II[d] section, where he brings several arguments to prove the duty and necessity of *free-thinking upon religious questions*. Now take *free-thinking* in that open sense that himself takes it in when he ascribes it to Chillingworth, Taylor, and Tillotson, and you may grant all his arguments, and yet quite disappoint him. But if you take it in that interior meaning that the members of his club do, as a modish and decent word for *atheism*, then all his arguments are mere trumpery; and his consequences from them are as short as his occasional learning in them is shallow.

One of his capital arguments is from the *evil of* SUPER-

[* *De Betover Wereld*, 1691-1693, by Balthasar Bekker; of which there is a French translation, *Le Monde Enchanté*, and an English one, *The World Bewitched*.—D.]

[† Samuel Harsnet, successively Bishop of Chichester and Norwich, was translated to the archbishopric of York in 1628. He wrote the two following works; to the first of which, I presume, Bentley alludes.

A Discovery of the Fraudulent practises of John Darrel Bacheler of Artes, in his proceedings concerning The Pretended Possession and dispossession of William Somers at Nottingham: of Thomas Darling, the boy of Burton at Caldwall: and of Katherine Wright at Mansfield, and Whittington: and of his dealings with one Mary Couper at Nottingham, detecting in some sort the deceitfull trade in these latter dayes of casting out Deuils. 1599, 4to.

A Declaration of egregious Popish Impostures, to with-draw the harts of her Maiesties Subiects from their allegeance, and from the truth of Christian Religion professed in England, vnder the pretence of casting out deuils. Practised by Edmvnds, alias Weston a Jesuit, and diuers Romish Priests his wicked associates. Wherevnto are annexed the Copies of the Confessions, and Examinations of the parties themselues, which were pretended to be possessed, and dispossessed, taken vpon oath before her Maiesties Commissioners, for causes Ecclesiasticall. 1603, 4to.—D.]

STITION;[n] which *terrible evil* and *great vice* can never be avoided but by turning *free-thinker*; that is (in plainer English) abandoning all religion. Strange! that *superstition* and *religion*, which have been distinguished and divided this two thousand years,* should yet stick so fast together that our author cannot separate them: so that to ease himself of the one, he must abdicate both. His dismal *description* of it is in the words of Cicero, which chiefly relate to little bigotries in civil life, not to fabulous conceptions about the Supreme Being. And his inference from thence is exactly as if I should now say to you: Sir, you must renounce your baptism and faith, or else you can never be rid of those *terrible superstitions* about the *death-watch, thirteen at one table, spilling of salt*, and *Childermas-day*.

XVIII.

But you'll know the man better, as also† his great reading and penetration, when you see how he manages and translates that passage of Cicero: I'll give you it here both in the original and our author's version.

Instat enim (superstitio) et urget, et quo te cumque verteris, persequitur: sive tu vatem, sive tu omen audieris; sive

[n] Pag. 33.

[* "Ceci regarde les *Caractères* de Théophraste. Mr. de la Bruyère remarque, dans son *Discours* sur ce philosophe, page 23, edit. d'Amst. 1731, que 'ce livre a pu être écrit la dernière année de la 115 olympiade, trois-cens quatorze ans avant l'ère Chrétienne, et qu'ainsi il y a deux-mille ans accomplis.' Dans l'article 16 de ses *Caractères*, Théophraste définit la *superstition*, en disant: Ἀμέλει ἡ δεισιδαιμονία δόξειεν εἶναι δειλία πρὸς τὸ δαιμόνιον. . . . . Théophraste n'est pas le seul payen qui l'ait dit et reconnu. Isaac Casaubon, dans ses notes sur cet endroit, cite Varron et Sénèque, qui s'en sont exprimés aussi clairement qu'aucun Chrétien le pût faire. Le prémier, cité par St. Augustin, a dit, *Deum a religioso vereri, a superstitioso timeri*; et l'autre ajoute, *Religio deos colit, superstitio violat.* Casaubon cite aussi Maxime de Tyr, qui dit, dans son 4 *Discours*, ὁ μὲν εὐσεβὴς φίλος θεῷ, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων κόλαξ [θεοῦ] . . . . . Il me seroit aisé de multiplier ces témoignages; et si je l'entreprenois, je n'oublierois pas la réflexion par laquelle Plutarque commence son traité de la *Superstition*; c'est que *l'ignorance de Dieu jette les hommes, selon leurs dispositions, dans l'athéisme, ou dans la superstition.*" AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 86.—D.]

[† as also: *not in 1st ed.*—D.]

immolaris, sive avem aspexeris; si Chaldæum, si haruspicem videris; si fulserit, si tonuerit; si tactum aliquid erit de cœlo; si ostenti simile natum factumve quippiam: quorum necesse est plerumque aliquid eveniat; ut numquam liceat quieta mente consistere. Perfugium videtur omnium laborum et sollicitudinum esse somnus: at ex eo ipso plurimæ curæ metusque nascuntur. *Cic. de Div. II.* 72.

If you give way to superstition, it will ever haunt and plague you. If you go to a prophet, or regard omens; if you sacrifice, or observe the flight of birds; if you consult an astrologer or haruspex; if it thunders or lightens, or any place is consumed with lightning, or such-like prodigy happens (as it is necessary some such often should), all the tranquillity of the mind is destroyed. And sleep itself, which seems to be an asylum and refuge from all trouble and uneasiness, does, by the aid of superstition, increase your troubles and fears.°

Now if it shall appear that our author has misconstrued almost every part and *comma* of this passage; that he has made the first parts contradict the last, and so has put his own nonsense upon the great original; that he has weakened his own design, and made the place speak with less strength against superstition than it really does; what apprehensions are we to have of so formidable a writer?

The whole tour of the passage is this: a man given to superstition can have no security, day or night, waking or sleeping; for occasions of it will *force* themselves upon him, *against his will*, do what he can to prevent them: and so all the particulars here specified are *involuntary* and *unsought*.

Sive tu vatem, sive tu omen audieris: if you GO *to a prophet*, says our translator, *or* REGARD *omens*. Pray, where's the Latin to answer *go* and *regard?* or where is common sense, thus plainly to beg the question? For if one

° Pag. 35.—[The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) exhibits the following alterations in the version of this passage. "If you *hear* a prophet or *an ominous word* .... if you *see* an astrologer .... or any place is *blasted* with lightning, or *any thing like a* prodigy happens (*of which some or other must often happen*)." p. 28. And so nearly the French translation, p. 55.—D.]

goes upon superstitious errands, no doubt he's troubled with superstition. The true sense is this: *If you hear a lunatic or frantic in the streets foretelling some mischiefs; if a word is spoken accidentally in your hearing, which may be interpreted ominous.* The *vates* or *divini* were mad-fellows bawling in the streets and roads; and their predictions might be contemned, but must necessarily be heard if you came that way.

Sive immolaris, sive avem aspexeris: a man was obliged often to *sacrifice,* even by his office; and birds must needs be *seen,* if one stept but out of Rome. These occurrences, therefore, were *unavoidable,* and so Cicero meant them. *Si Chaldæum, si haruspicem videris; if you* SEE *them;* and that could not be prevented, all public places being haunted with them. But what does our translator make of these? *If you sacrifice,* says he, *or* OBSERVE *the flight of birds; if you* CONSULT *an astrologer or haruspex.* Pure nonsense again, and point blank against Cicero's meaning: one makes that done by *design,* which* the other makes by *accident.* If by *accident,* then it's true that superstition *instat et urget, haunts and plagues* one, and there's no escaping it: but if by *design,* 'tis labouring in a *fairy* circle; 'tis begging and supposing the thing in debate.

To pass in silence his false version of *de cœlo tactum, consumed with lightning,* instead of *blasted;* the next instance of his dulness surpasses all belief. *Si ostenti simile natum factumve quippiam;* that is, *if any monster is born, or something like a prodigy happens;* as, raining of blood or wheat, or the like. You see Cicero says *ostenti simile,* LIKE *a prodigy;* for his part in that discourse was to deny there were *true* prodigies. A monster with two heads was no prodigy, but was occasioned by natural causes: the blood or wheat was either a mistake, or was carried up by a whirlwind. But behold now how our translator has managed it: *if any* SUCH-LIKE *prodigy happens.* This version, I am sure, is a greater prodigy than any of them all. What, *ostenti simile, a such-like prodigy?* 'Tis manifest by his construction

[* which; 1*st ed.* "what."—D.]

he joined them in the same case, as adjective and substantive. Stupidity incredible! I'll leave every man to his own astonishment, and say no more of the matter. I'll only ask him, not where his *grammar*, but where his *brains* were, when, by owning and confessing *such-like prodigies*, he frustrated both Cicero's and his own argument?

To go on once more: *quorum necesse est plerumque aliquid eveniat;* that is, *of which things* (all that were enumerated before) *some or other* MUST *frequently happen.* Observe that MUST, *necesse est*, must happen of *necessity*. And now you see, what I said before, that our translator has made the first parts of the passage contradict the last. If he had had* the least grain of sagacity, this last *comma* might have guided him to the true meaning of the former; that the instances must all be *accidental*, and not *voluntary* and with design. Take the several instances reckoned up, and it's hardly possible to pass one day in common life but some objects of superstition will *necessarily* present themselves: but is it *necessary* to *go* to prophets, to *regard* omens, to *observe* birds, to *consult* astrologers? Surely these four verbs have the signification of *choice*, not of *necessity*. And now, gentlemen of the English clergy, what think you of your *free-thinker?* Did I not promise for him that he would manage his old passages with great ability and dexterity?

Dixin' ego in hoc esse vobis Atticam elegantiam?†

XIX.

He's so pleased with this subject of *superstition*, that he holds us in it still with two most common citations; for what can there be that is not so in Horace and Virgil? Horace, it seems, despises *dreams*, *witches*, *spectres*, and *prodigies;* and Virgil goes something further. And what then? Both these were bred young in the Epicurean school, and so speak here the language of their sect. They prove nothing, they

[* If he had had; 1*st ed.* "And if he'd had."—D.]
[† Ter. *Eun.* v. 9. 63.—D.]

only affirm. And so the argument is no more than this; miracles, religion, the pains of hell, are false, because Epicurus's doctrine was against them. A notable proof indeed, were the passages never so well handled; but, as ill luck and worse ignorance would have it, he has maimed and murdered them both. Take that of Horace, with the author's version:

Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas,
*Nocturnos lemures, portentaque Thessala rides?**

Are you so much above superstition, as to laugh at all dreams, panic fears, miracles, witches, ghosts, and prodigies?

Magicos terrores, panic fears in the translation; so very unhappily, that both the words are wrong. For *terrores* are not *fears* here, the internal passion of the mind; but external *terrors*, the tricks and artifices of wizards to fright, scare, and terrify. And then by substituting *panic* for *magic*, he has just served Horace as he did Cicero, and made him talk complete nonsense. A general fright falling upon an army or city, as if the enemy was at the camp or the gates, when the alarm was found to be false and groundless, the Greeks called a *panic*; as if the god *Pan* was the author of it. Now it's plain that these frights (when there's probability in the alarm, and the enemy lies within due distance) can never be known to be *panic* and vain till the business is over. In the mean time wise and foolish are both under the *panic*: φεύγοντι καὶ παῖδες θεῶν, says Pindar;† in such cases *the very heroes and sons of the gods run away*. What sense, therefore, can he make of this English he has bestowed on Horace? *Are you so much above superstition as to laugh at panic fears?* What, laugh in the beginning or height of them? Here's a sudden alarm comes at midnight, that all Rome is on fire: is not Horace to stir out of his bed, but to fall *a-laughing* and

[* Ep. ii. 2. 208. In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) the version of these lines is not altered, but there is a note on "panic fears"—"*See the Horace of Père Tartaron*"—p. 28. The French translation has "Songes, terreurs paniques, monstres, sorcières, esprits-follets, magie; *tout cela ne vous trouble-t-il point?*" with a similar note, p. 56.—D.]

[† *Nem.* ix. 65. ed. Heyne.—D.]

lie still? A sagacious interpreter! not to reflect that *panic fear* is no object of superstition; and consequently could not come in* with the rest of that list in Horace: unless his worship will say, that the precept here is, *to laugh at panic fears after they are known to be so.* A merry precept indeed! which those that were most scared will be the readiest to follow, when once their fears are vanished, and the alarm is over.

XX.

And now for the passage of Virgil, and his accurate translation:

> *Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,*
> *Atque metus omnes, et inexorabile fatum*
> *Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari.*†

Happy is the man who has discovered the causes of things, and is thereby cured of all kind of fears, even of death itself, and all the noise and din of hell.[p]

Happy, says the poet, in the first place is the *philosopher*, in the second the *countryman*. Now under the notion of a philosopher he describes an Epicurean, having been bred under his master Sciron, a teacher in that sect; and in three lines he has admirably couched the principal opinions they were known by or valued themselves upon, *that there is no Divine Providence, no destiny nor divination, and no immortality of the soul.*

Rerum cognoscere causas, discover the causes of things. Of what *things*, and with what *design?* Of all the meteors in the heavens, thunder, lightning, &c., and of things on earth that are seemingly portentous and miraculous; in order to rid men's minds of all religion and its fears. For in the

[* in: *not in 1st ed.*—D.] [† *Georg.* ii. 490.—D.]

[p] Pag. 37. [In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) we find—"and *has trampled under his feet* all kind of fears, even death itself." p. 29. The French translation has—"*se mettre au-dessus de toutes sortes des craintes, et mépriser le destin inéxorable, et tout ce qu'on dit pour rendre effroyable la pensée de la mort.*" p. 58.—D.]

Epicurean scheme, *the ignorance of causes* was the sole cause of religious fears, as Lucretius avers; with whose comfortable lines our author may here entertain himself:

> *Cætera, quæ fieri in terris cœloque tuentur*
> *Mortales, pavidis cum pendent mentibu' sæpe,*
> *Efficiunt animos humiles formidine divûm,*
> *Depressosque premunt ad terram; propterea quod*
> IGNORANTIA CAUSARUM *conferre deorum*
> *Cogit ad imperium res, et concedere regnum:*
> *Quorum operum* causas *nulla ratione videre*
> *Possunt, ac fieri divino numine rentur.**

'Tis plain, therefore, what Virgil means by *causes:* and then *Atque metus omnes subjecit pedibus, who has lain all fears under the feet,* is as if he had said, has trampled and triumphed over all religion; for that the poet understands here by *fears.* METUS, *religio,* says Nonius Marcellus;† for which he cites these verses of the *Æneïs;*

> *Laurus erat tecti medio in penetralibus altis,*
> *Sacra comam, multosque* metu *servata per annos.*

Where Servius too agrees with him; METU, says he, *religione, quæ nascitur per timorem.* And so Lucretius very dreadfully paints *religion:*

> *Quæ caput a cœli regionibus ostendebat,*
> *Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans.*‡

Whence, by the way, you may observe, that the old masters in atheism, as well as the disciples of the new club, took shelter in their system out of pure *dread* and *fear.*

The next *comma* of the passage is *inexorabile fatum, inexorable fate;* by which the poet means, that the Epicurean doctrine had trampled down the whole notion of *destiny* and *divination.* That the followers of that sect denied εἱμαρμένην καὶ μαντικὴν, *fate and predictions,* is too vulgarly known to

[* Lib. vi. 49.—D.] [† Cap. iv. p. 349. ed. Mer.—*Æn.* vii. 59.—D.]
[‡ Lib. i. 65.—D.]

be here proved or insisted on. And so we are come to the last clause, *strepitumque Acherontis avari;* where every one sees the Epicurean assertion, *that the soul dies with the body.*

To return now to our learned writer. How dexterously has he managed his game, to bring a passage that bears full against all *religion* whatever, as levelled against some small bigotries and *superstitious fears!* And what a proper inference has he added! *Well has Virgil spoke thus;* FOR *by free-thinking alone we know that God* made *and* governs *the world.** What, from this passage of Virgil, that's directly against *creation* and *providence?* Never sure was poor FOR put so hard to't before, or employed in such bungling work. He understood not one line of the place, as will appear by his version. *And is thereby cured,* says he, *of all kind of fears, even of death itself.* What does the man talk of *cured?* Is *cured* the same with *subjecit pedibus?* Is the *cure* of one man's private *fears* (any more than of his *corns*) the same with *trampling under foot the fears of all mankind,* and the whole notion of religion? For that, as I have said, is the thought of the poet, and is borrowed from these lines of Lucretius:

> *Quare* RELIGIO PEDIBUS SUBJECTA *vicissim*
> *Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cœlo.*†

And then, *fatum inexorabile,* our wise interpreter translates it *death;* which the very epithet would have hindered, had he the least taste of good writing, though he'd known nothing of *fatis avolsa voluntas,*‡ *the liberty of will,* and contingency of all events, which Epicurus maintained against the Stoics. And yet, *the* DIVINE *Virgil,* says our judicious author. He is very easily satisfied, if what little he comprehends of him appears to have *divinity* in it. For let the poet be never so *divine* in the original, it's plain he's lower than *human* in this writer's version and understanding.

[* The words of Collins are, "For by *free-thinking* alone men are capable of knowing that a perfectly good, just, wise, and powerful Being made and governs the world." p. 37.—D.]

[† Lib. i. 79.—D.]

[‡ Lucr. lib. ii. 257.—D.]

XXI.

Between the two passages of Horace and Virgil our author scatters a short reflection, that shews his mighty learning. *The evil,* says he, *of superstition is now much increased; and men are under greater terrors and uneasiness of mind than pagans of old possibly could be, when they thought they hazarded less.*[q] This manifestly shews that he thinks *eternal torments* were never imagined in the pagan scheme, but were first introduced by Christianity. Just contrary. The vulgar in paganism universally believed them, as his friend Lucretius would have told him in express terms:

——— *Nam si certam finem esse viderent*
Ærumnarum homines, aliqua ratione valerent
Religionibus atque minis obsistere vatum:
Nunc ratio nulla est restandi, nulla facultas;
Æternas quoniam PŒNAS *in morte timendum.*[*]

Nay, this is the very thing that our writer quoted out of Virgil, *strepitus Acherontis avari, the terrible noise and rumour of Acheron;* to have *trampled* upon which would have been a foolish boast of the Epicureans, if the generality of mankind had not believed it. And what, pray, was the pretended privilege of the famous Eleusinian rites at Athens, in which Augustus[†] himself was initiated? Was it not, that the partakers of them were conveyed into some happy station after death; while all the rest of men were for ever to be *rolled,* ἐν βορβόρῳ, *in dirt and mire,* and other scenes of misery?[‡] And yet how low even that *happy state* was commonly thought, appears from the sentiment of Achilles's ghost in Homer; who, when he is complimented by Ulysses

[q] Pag. 36.

[*] Lib. i. 108.—D.]

[†] "Sueton. in August. cap. 93." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 113.—D.]

[‡] AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 113, cites Aristides in *Panath.* I give the passage from Dindorf's ed. t. i. p. 421 (= t. i. p. 259. ed. Jebb). Ἀλλὰ μὴν τό γε κέρδος τῆς παννυχίδος, οὐχ' ὅσον ἡ παροῦσα εὐθυμία, οὐδ' αἱ τῶν ἐκ τοῦ προτέρου χρόνου δυσκολιῶν λύσεις καὶ ἀπαλλαγαί· ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τῆς τελευτῆς ἡδίους ἔχειν τὰς ἐλπίδας ὡς ἄμεινον διδόντας, καὶ οὐκ ἐν σκότῳ τὲ καὶ βορβόρῳ κεισομένους, ἃ δὴ τοὺς ἀμυήτους ἀναμένειν.—D.]

as the happiest of men both alive and dead, makes answer, that he had rather alive be a poor day-labourer to the meanest peasant *than be emperor of all the dead:*

Ἦ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.[r]

'Tis so false, then, what our author lays down here, that the pagan religion gave less uneasiness in life, because they thought they *hazarded less* after death than we Christians think we do, that it's certain they thought bad men *hazarded* as *much*, and good men *obtained* infinitely *less*.

XXII.

He comes now to a IV[th] argument for the absolute necessity *of free-thinking on religious questions*, and that is *from the infinite number of pretenders to revelation*;[s] which he afterwards dully repeats under another head, in the Bramins, Parsees, Bonzes, Talapoins, and Dervizes,[t] to which he might have added several more. Now here is his perpetual juggle about his term of art, *free-thinking*. Take it in the common sense, and we agree with him. Think *freely* on all the various pretences to revelation; compare the counterfeit *scriptures* with the true, and see the divine lustre of the one, to which all the others serve as a foil. It was upon this very account that Christians took the pains to translate and publish them; not to confound religion, but to confirm it. And yet the occult meaning of our author is, from the variety of scriptures to insinuate none is true. An argument as weak as it is stale, and baffled over and over. Could this reasoning have any effect, Christianity had never begun. For besides the true *living oracles* of the Jews, was not the whole world then full of false ones, written and divulged? and *oracular temples* (*or churches*,* if he will) then in being to deliver out more? Even *suppose* Christianity to be true, yet those impostures must necessarily be, while human nature is what it is: and our Scriptures have foretold

[r] Odyss. Λ. v. 490.

[s] Pag. 40.

[t] Pag. 52.

[* See p. 313.—D.]

it. Is that, then, a good argument *backwards* against the truth of any thing, which *a priori* is plain must happen so, though that thing be *allowed* to be true?

But a very extraordinary line has slipped from our author here; *If a man*, says he, *be under any* [*an*] *obligation to listen to any revelation at all.* This thought, it seems, was a little *too free*, and so a *dele* corrects it in the list of *errata*.* 'Tis very easy to sift and toss this fine thought, which would afford good diversion; for besides its own silliness, it contradicts all the rest, and spoils the whole grimace of the book. But we'll spare it, since the author himself has chastised it; at the hint (I suppose) of a graver member of the club, who was not for discovering the whole farce at once, and shewing the actors to be mere *puppets*.

XXIII.

We have heard here of the much-applauded foundation of your *Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, which this despicable scribbler, though he owns it is supported and encouraged by *her most excellent majesty* and the chief persons of the kingdom,[u] dares openly ridicule. This is much such a saucy and slovenly *freedom* as the rest of the Greeks laughed at in the islanders of Corfu:

Ἐλευθέρα Κέρκυρα, χέζ' ὅπου θέλεις.†
Corcyra certe libera est; ubi vis, caca.

[* Hare, in *The Clergyman's Thanks to Phileleutherus* (see note on the Dedicatory Epistle to the second part of these *Remarks*), has the following observation: "You seem to have mistaken the design of our *free-thinkers*, when you fancy, by putting the most extraordinary words of their whole book into the *errata*, they have thereby disowned them: on the contrary, I take it to be their favourite line, and put into the *errata* because it is so, as the best way to have it seen with the greatest ease and most advantage; whereas as it stands in the body of the book, a careless reader might either pass it, or not attend to it." p. 32.—But the words in question are struck out from the later 8vo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291), the 12mo ed., and the French translation.—D.]

[u] Pag. 41.

[† Ar. de La Chapelle (*La Frip. Laïque*, p. 121) cites Eustathius on Dionys. Per. v. 494.—See also Strabo (lib. vii. Epit.), t. i. p. 478, ed. Falc. and Erasmi *Adagia*, p. 1153. ed. 1606.—D.]

For our cleanly author here assumes the like or worse license, to lay his filth and ordure even upon the throne and the altar.

We envy not your due *liberty*, the most valuable blessing of good government; but if such insults even upon majesty itself and all that's accounted sacred are allowed among you with impunity, it gives no great presage of your lasting prosperity;

——— *nimia illæc licentia*
*Profecto evadet in aliquod magnum malum.**

But to leave unpleasing thoughts, and for once *to answer a fool according to his folly*. Are the *Talapoins of Siam* then to be put here upon a level with the whole *clergy of England*, the light and glory (if they are not changed all on a sudden) of present Christianity? and this done by a sorry retailer of atheistical scraps, which he understands not three lines of, but at the first offer of a translation betrays his stupidity? Is he to *draw out your divines*, whose names we know not here because he has mangled them,† but conclude them to be men of worth and distinction, from the very credit of his abusing them? If he is once for *drawing out*, and reviving the old trade of *ἀνδραποδοκαπηλία*, *selling and exporting of*

[* Ter. *Adelph.* iii. 4, 63.—D.]

[† The names are given entire in the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse*, p. 34 (see note, p. 291), and in the French translation, p. 67.—"Should the King of Siam (or any other infidel prince), in return for the favour of our endeavours to convert him and his kingdom to our religion, desire to send us a parcel of [*later* 8vo, some of; 12mo, a pack of] his Talapoins (so the priests of Siam are called) to convert us to the *religion by law established* in Siam, I cannot see but that our *Society for propagating the Gospel*, and all the contributors and well-wishers to it, must acknowledge the king's request to be highly reasonable, and perfectly of a piece with their own project [*later eds.* design]; and particularly must allow to the King of Siam, that it is as much the duty of the members of the church of England to *think freely* on what the missionary Talapoins shall propose to them, as it is the duty of the members of the church of Siam to *think freely* on what shall be proposed by the missionary priests of England: and therefore no doubt all they who sincerely desired the conviction of the Siamese would give their missionaries the same encouragement here which we expect for ours in Siam. The institution, therefore, of this society supposes *free-thinking in matters of religion* to be the duty of all men on the face

men, it may perhaps be found more serviceable to your government to oblige your East India Company to take on board the whole *growing sect*, and lodge them at Madagascar among their confessed and claimed kindred (since they make themselves but a higher species of brutes), the *monkeys* and the *drills*; or to order your new South Sea Company to deliver them to the Spaniards as part of the *assiento*, to be *free-diggers* in the mines there; and after a decent time in that *purgatory*, to convey them to their *happy country*, their *paradise of New Jersey*, where neither *priest*, nor *physician*, nor *lawyer* can molest them.[v]

XXIV.

Well, but VI[ly], *the gospel itself, and our Saviour and his apostles by their own example, recommend free-thinking*.[w] Grant the scribbler this argument, if *free-thinking* is taken in its legitimate sense, as Chillingworth, Hooker, and Wilkins made use of that freedom. But if he juggles as usually in the term of art, what greater nonsense, than that Christ and his disciples should recommend atheism? But our author's learning is here again admirably displayed. *St. Paul*, says he, *when he went into the synagogues of the Jews*,

of the earth. And upon that account I cannot sufficiently commend the project [*later* 8vo, design]. And oh! that the proper persons were but employed for the execution of so glorious a design [*later eds.* work]! That such zealous divines as our Sacheverels, our Atterburys, our Smalridges, our Stubs's, our Higgins's, our Milburns, and our Swifts, were drawn out annually, as our *military missionaries* are, to be sent into *foreign parts to propagate the gospel!* (a service in which such conscientious men must rejoice, since preaching the gospel to infidel nations is no doubt contained in *Christ's commission*, whatever *haranguing upon a text* among Christians, falsely called [*later eds.* Christians, by some called] *preaching the gospel*, may be); we might then hope to see blessed days, the *doctrine and discipline of the Church of England* triumph throughout the world, and faction cease at home; as by the means of the others our arms triumph abroad, and we securely take our rest at night, and travel by day unmolested. And no doubt, likewise, but it would be as beneficial to the kingdom of Siam to have a select number annually taken out of their vast body of Talapoins." *Discourse, &c.* p. 42-3.—D.]

[v] Pag. 108. [See p. 317 and note.—D.]

[w] Pag. 44.

and reasoned with them, took a very extraordinary step, as now it would be looked on;* and so he compares it to PENN the Quaker going into St. Paul's, or Mr. WHISTON into the House of Convocation, to reason there against the *established church.* Penn's name has been long known among us in Germany, and the latter we have lately heard of in the *journals* and *bibliothèques.* But how ignorant and stupid is this writer with his foolish comparison! The fact he speaks of and quotes (Acts, xvii. 2, 3) was done at Thessalonica, a pagan city in Macedonia: and was the Jewish synagogue the *established church* there? or rather allowed upon *toleration?* But to pardon him this, and suppose the thing done in Judea itself, where our Saviour often did the same, was it any thing like to *interrupting divine service,* or *disturbing the proceedings of a synod?*† Our author knows not one tittle of the manner and custom of a synagogue. After reading a few sections out of the Law and the Prophets, the ablest men of the assembly used to stand up and expound the passages read; and if any stranger or person of note chanced to be there, he was asked by them if he had any discourse to impart to the congregation. This is expressly affirmed by Philo the Jew, and others, and appears clearly from Acts, xiii. 15, where at Antioch in Pisidia, the rulers of the synagogue seeing Paul and Barnabas strangers there, *sent unto*

[* The 12mo ed. (see note, p. 291) adds—"*and into the market-places at Athens, where he disputed with the devout people he met with.*" p. 35. And so the French translation, p. 69.—D.]

[† "For should William Penn the Quaker, or other religious person differing from the *established church,* come to St. Paul's during the time of *divine service* to *reason* with the *court of aldermen, preacher,* and *singing-men* [*the* 12*mo adds,* or go into the markets of London to dispute with the devout butchers and herb-women]; or Mr. Whiston into the Lower House of Convocation, to *reason* with them [12*mo,* with the members]; it is certain, that, pursuant to the false notions which now universally prevail, the *one* would be treated as a *madman* and *fanatic,* and the other as a *disturber of the proceedings of the holy synod,* which assumes a right to determine without *reasoning* with the person whose opinions they condemn." *Discourse,* p. 45.—The French translation (p. 70) agrees with the 12mo ed. (see note, p. 291) in this passage.—D.]

them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. So that if even Penn and Whiston should do no more, but speak when desired by authority, it would be no *extraordinary step* at all. The only *step* here that appears *very extraordinary* is our author's bold leaping in* the dark, and blundering about matters where he's quite blind and ignorant.

XXV.

But he proceeds in his argument from our Saviour's gospel and example, and declares it impossible *that Christ should give so partial a command, as to contain a reserve in behalf of any set of priests, in prejudice of the general rules of free-thinking.*[x] Our author is very often† orthodox, when he opposes what nobody affirms, or affirms what nobody opposes. And yet that very orthodoxy is all artifice and craft, to insinuate as if the clergy did really maintain the one, or deny the other. Pray who is it that challenges such a *reserve?* He has named a *reverend doctor*‡ here of his side: name another, if he can, that's against him. The thing he seems to contend for is true and allowed him; but he has given such an awkward reason for it, as would spoil his own inference, if better hands than his did not support it. *All the priests upon earth,* says he, *being* (in our Saviour's life-time) *enemies to him and his gospel, and he giving the privilege of infallibility to nobody besides his apostles, he*

[* in; 1*st ed.* "into."—D.]

[x Pag. 46.

[† very often; 1*st ed.* "often very."—D.]

[‡ "And he commanded his own disciples not to be called *rabbi* nor *masters*; by which last words our learned commentator, the Reverend Dr. Whitby, understands, *that we should call no man guide or master upon earth, no fathers, no church, no council.*" *Discourse,* p. 46.—The words of Whitby on Matt. xxiii. 8, are these: "That we should call no man *guide* or *master* upon *earth,* no *fathers,* no *church,* no *councils,* so as absolutely to submit ourselves in the concernment of our eternal interests to the conduct of their judgments, or give them dominion over our faith and conscience; Christ being the sole *guide* and teacher of his *church,*" &c. *Par. and Com.* v. i. p. 200. ed. 1727.—D.]

could not be secure that any priests could [*would*] *ever be otherwise.*[x] Is the stupidity of this greater, or the impiety? Was not he *secure* of that, who declared *he would be with his church to the end of the world,* and that *the gates of hell should never prevail against it?* But to let this pass (for if I mistake not our author's principles, he had rather be proved an impious or knavish writer ten times than a silly one once), I affirm further, that this assertion of his is absolute nonsense, though Jesus Christ were *supposed* to be an impostor. For his argument lies thus: because the Jewish and pagan priests were once enemies to Christ and his gospel, he could not be *secure* that *any* of his own priests would ever be otherwise. A most powerful syllogism! At this rate no sect of philosophy, no heresy, nor false religion, would ever have been set up or thought of. Because all other sects opposed Zeno when he first founded Stoicism, he could not be *secure* that the Stoics his own followers would ever do otherwise. Because Socinus found all people at first against him and his notions, he could not be *secure* but that the very Socinians would always be as much against them. Because all priests abhorred Mahomet's *Alcoran* when first it was broached, he could not be secure that his own *mufties and dervizes* would not always abhor it. This, you'll say, is very strange: but I'll concede our author one thing, which looks a little parallel to it; that though he's the chief of the *rising and growing sect,* and has published their *new gospel,* he cannot be *secure* that his own fraternity and members of the club may not soon be ashamed both of him and it.

XXVI.

And now we come to a new argument, *from the conduct of the priests;* which by a tedious induction is branched out into ten instances, and takes up half a hundred pages. And what will be the grand result?

[x] Ibid.—[The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has—"any priests *except his own dozen.*" p. 36.—D.]

*Næ iste hercle magno jam conatu magnas nugas dixerit.**

The sum of it is no more than this: *the priests cannot agree among themselves about several points of doctrine, the attributes of God, the canon of Scripture, &c.; and therefore I'll be of no religion at all.* This threadbare obsolete stuff, the most obvious surmise that any wavering fool catches at when he first warps towards atheism, is dressed up here as if it was some new and formidable business.

What great feats can our author now promise himself from this; which, after it has been tried age after age, never had influence on mankind either in religious concerns or common life? *Till all agree, I'll stand neuter.* Very well; and till all the world speaks one language, pray be you mute and say nothing. It were much the wiser way, than to talk as you have done. By this rule, the Roman gentry were to learn no philosophy at all, till the Greeks could unite into one sect; nor make use of any physician, till the Empirics and Methodists concurred in their way of practice. How came Christianity to *begin*, since the objection now brought to *pull it down* was as visible and potent then as now? or how has it subsisted so long, since all the present discord in opinions does not near amount to the sum of what Epiphanius alone collected above a thousand years ago?† Nay, how came our author's new sect to be *rising* and *growing*, since the atheists are as much at variance among themselves, and can settle

[* Ter. *Heaut.* iv. 1, 8. "Næ *ista*," &c.—D.]

[† "Le catalogue des hérésies, dressé par St. Epiphane, en contient 80. Encore marque-t-il dans la conclusion de son recueil, qu'il y en avoit ajouté 5, pour faire un nombre égal à celui des concubines dont il est parlé dans le Cantique des Cantiques, vi. 8. Le catalogue de St. Augustin est de 90. Encore ce père n'assure-t-il pas de n'avoir rien oublié. *Quæ hæreses ortæ sint*, dit-il, *quomodo commemorare omnes potui, qui omnes nosse non potui? Quod ideo existimo, quia nullus eorum, quorum de hæresi scripta legi, omnes posuit. Quandoquidem inveni apud alium, quas apud alium non inveni, et rursus apud istum, quas ille non posuit. Ego autem propterea plures quam ipsi posui, quia collegi ex omnibus quas omnes apud singulos non inveni, additis etiam his quas ipse recolens apud ullum illorum invenire non potui. Unde merito credo nec me posuisse omnes, quia nec omnes qui de hac re scripserant legere potui, &c.*" Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 138.—D.]

and centre in nothing? Or, if they should resolve to conspire in one certain system, they would be *atheists* indeed still, but they would lose the title of *free-thinkers*.

This is the total of his long induction; but let us see his conduct in the parts of it. Some *fathers* thought *God to be material;* this he has said, and I have answered before in *Remark* the X^th^. *Several ancient Christian priests of Egypt were so gross as to conceive God to be in the shape of a man.*[y] If they did so, they were no more *gross* than his master Epicurus, who was of the very same opinion. But it's fatal to our author ever to blunder when he talks of Egypt. These *priests of Egypt* were all illiterate *laymen;* the monks or hermits of those days, that retired into the desert, the fittest place for their stupidity.* *But several of your English divines tax each other with atheism, either positively or consequently.*[z] Wonderful! and so because three or four divines in your island are too fierce in their disputes, all we on the great continent must abandon religion. Yes; but the *Bramins,* the *Mahometans,* &c. *pretend to scriptures as well as we.*[a] This, too, has come once already, and is considered in *Remark* the XXII^d^; but, being so great a piece of news, deserved to be told twice. And who, without his telling, would have known that the Romish church received the *Apocrypha* as canonical?[b] Be that as it will, I am sure it is unheard-of news, that your church receives them as *half-canonical.*[c] I find no such word in your Articles, nor ever saw a *such-like prodigy*† before. *Half-canonical?* what idea, what sense has it? 'tis exactly the same as *half-divine, half-infinite, half-*

[y] Pag. 47.

[* "Voyez Socrate, Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. 7, où il dit que ces moines étoient ἀπλοϊκοὶ, ἰδιῶται, ἀγράμματοι." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 141.—D.]

[z] Pag. 48.—["The Reverend Mr. William Carrol has wrote several books to prove the Reverend Dr. Clark and the Reverend Mr. Samuel Bold *atheists* in that sense. The Reverend Mr. Turner charges the Reverend Dr. Cudworth with *atheism* for his *Intellectual System of the Universe,*" &c.—D.]

[a] Pag. 52. [b] Pag. 53. [c] Ibid.

[† See p. 324.—D.]

omnipotent. But away with his *Apocrypha;* he'll like it the worse while he lives, for the sake of *Bel and the Dragon.**

XXVII.

But now to make room for his learning again: for *the rabbis,* says he, *among the Samaritans, who now live at Sichem in Palestine, receive the five books of Moses for their Scripture, the copy whereof is very different from ours.*[d] What shall I admire most, his ignorance or his impudence? Why the RABBIS at Sichem, exclusive and by way of distinction? Does not the whole Samaritan nation receive the Pentateuch as well as their *rabbis?* 'Tis just as if he had said, *among the English the reverend divines receive the Bible.* But is not their copy of the five books of Moses VERY DIFFERENT from ours? No question he has often affirmed this with great sufficiency at his club, though he does not know one letter of the language. The Samaritan Pentateuch has now been printed above half a century; and the various readings wherein it differs from the Jewish have been twice collected and published, even to the minutest letter; first by Morinus at Paris,† and afterwards anew by your Walton at London,‡ both of them *priests.* I have perused those various lections; and do affirm here on my own knowledge, that those two copies differ no more from each other than the same book (Terence, Tully, Ovid, or the like) differs from itself in the several manuscripts that I myself have examined. So that it's a plain demonstration that the copies were originally the same; nor can better evidence be desired, that the Jewish Bibles have not been corrupted or interpolated, than this very book of the Samaritans, which,

[* See p. 314.—D.]

[d] Ibid.—[In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291), the words, "who now live at Sichem in Palestine," are omitted, p. 42; and so in the French translation, p. 82.—D.]

[† In the Paris *Polyglot,* 1645.—D.]

[‡ In the London *Polyglot,* 1657.—D.]

after above 2000 years' discord between the two nations, varies as little from the other as any *classic* author in less tract of time has disagreed from itself, by the unavoidable slips and mistakes of so many transcribers. And now does not our author come off victoriously with his *rabbis of Sichem?*

Well, but the *Samaritans have a chronicon, or history of themselves from Moses's time, which is lodged in the public library at Leyden, and has never been printed; and this is quite different from that contained in the historical books of the Old Testament.*[e] Here's now a sly insinuation of some great discoveries to be made out of this book; and yet the mighty matter is no more than this: Joseph Scaliger above a hundred years ago procured this book from Sichem, and left it among others by his will to the library at Leyden. There it's name has long appeared in the printed catalogue; it has been transcribed more than once; and one copy, formerly Professor Golius's, has fallen into the hands of my learned friend Mr. Reland at Utrecht; whereof take his own account.* 'Tis called *The Book of Joshua,* but its author is not named: 'tis written in Arabic; since Mahomet's time most certainly, but how much since is not known: it pretends to be a translation from the Hebrew, but it's only its own voucher, there being no fame now remaining of any such original. It consists of about L. chapters; XXXIX. of which make the sole story of Joshua; six chapters more reach as low as Nebuchadnezzar; the very next comes to Alexander the Great, and his *travels thorow the air;* the next makes a long stride to the Emperor Hadrian; and two more to the time of Alexander Severus. This is the noble *chronicle* that our judicious *free-thinker* would place above the Bible, when the very Sichemites do not place it so high as his own jargon *half-canonical.* 'Tis pity a man of so fine a taste, and the Mæcenas of the new club (since he hints

[e] Pag. 53.

[* "Reland. Dissertat. t. ii. ou vii. Diss. de Samarit. p. 14." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 146.—D.]

with such concern that *it is not yet published*), should not be obliged at his own charge to get it translated and printed.

XXVIII.

The very view of the following pages fills me with disdain, to see such common stuff brought in with an air of importance. *Hebrew and Septuagint; Gospels according to the Hebrews and Egyptians; the Traditions of Matthias, and the Secrets of Peter; Apostolic Constitutions, and Gospel of James; and the different notions of priests concerning inspiration.*[f] And what of all these, or half a hundred more, that my learned and Lutheran friend Dr. Fabricius* has amassed together? Has our author a mind to read and *think* of them? Think *freely* and welcome; for I suppose that was the design my friend had in the publication. Or is he rather at his old play, that he'll regard no Scripture at all till all Christians among themselves, and Talapoins with them, can agree? *Jubeas stultum esse libenter:*† let him have license to play the fool, since he answers his own argument in the very words where he puts it. *For all*, says he, *who build their religion on books, must from the nature of things vary about the books themselves, their copies, and their inspiration.*[g] Here's now both the poison and the antidote in one. For if it's necessary *from the nature of things* that men shall so differ in their opinions, that difference is no

[f] Pag. 54.

[* "Le savant et l'infatigable Mr. Jean-Albert Fabricius fit imprimer en 1703, à Hambourg, le *Code Apocryphe du N. Testament*, en 2 tomes, auxquels il en ajouta un troisième en 1719, aussi gros que les 2 précédens ensemble. C'est un recueil de toutes les pièces supposées que l'on a attribuées ou à J. C., ou à ses ennemis contemporains, ou aux apôtres, ou aux hommes qui vécurent avec les apôtres. Dans les 2 premiers tomes il y a plus de cinquante titres principaux; et dans le troisième il s'en trouve près d'une trentaine. Ajoutez à cela le *Spicilegium* de Grabe, en 2 vol. Oxf. 1698, qui est à peu près dans le même goût; et l'on verra que Mr. Collins n'avoit pas grandes recherches à faire pour citer quatre ou cinq apocryphes." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 148.—D.]

[† Hor. *Sat.* 1. 1. 63. "Jubeas *miserum*," &c.—D.]

[g] Pag. 56.

argument *backwards* to prove the falseness of all those books. Unless the man will prove *a priori*, that revelation ought not, cannot be communicated and conveyed to us in *books*. Which when he performs, or finds out a better method, it shall be allowed to be the first instance of *science* or *art* that the *growing sect* has invented.

XXIX.

But notwithstanding he has fore-answered *from the nature of things* all that he can say about *different interpretations*, yet he proceeds in XX. tedious pages to enumerate those differences, which he ranges under XII. heads, and before them puts a long preamble out of your learned Bishop Taylor.* That prelate, it seems, has with great acuteness and eloquence displayed the difficulties in acquiring a full and perfect knowledge of all the abstruse places of Scripture; affirming at the same time, that all the necessaries to salvation and moral duties are delivered there most clearly and openly. Well, and what does our wise author gain from the bishop's confession? Has not he himself gone a great deal further, and made *all the sciences and arts*, every imaginable part of knowledge, to be requisite *towards having a just notion of that miscellaneous book, the Bible?*[h] If it be so, what wonder is it (nay what miracle were it otherwise) that, in an allowed freedom of *thinking* and *printing*, your English divines should have different opinions? nay that the self-same man by advances in age, and by progress in study, should differ from himself? I have run over the citations here out of Taylor, and find scarce one of those difficulties so peculiar to Scripture as not to be common to other authors: to know which with exactness, as becomes every writer (especially a declared adversary to a whole order professing

[* Collins quotes from the 3d and 4th sections of *The Liberty of Prophesying*, in Taylor's collection of *Polemical Discourses*, ed. 1674, pp. 965, 966, 967, 969, 970, 972, 973, 974.—D.]

[h] Pag. 11.—[See *Remark* viii. p. 304.—D.]

learning), is no easy and perfunctory matter, as our author to his shame and sorrow may hereafter find and feel.

His XII. heads of difference he has disposed in this order: *the nature and essence of the divine Trinity, the importance of that article of faith, the specific body at the resurrection, predestination, eternal torments, sabbath or Lord's day, episcopacy, original sin, our Saviour's human soul, lay-baptism, usury, and the power of the civil magistrate in matters ecclesiastical.* About all these points, and several others he could name, some of your English divines, it seems, for want of *good conduct*, have had contests and disputes: a most surprising piece of news! to you, as if none had heard of those books till this discovery; and to us, as if we were entirely free from the like disputations.

Now what would our author have here? Is he angry that all cannot agree? or will he make himself the arbitrator? If he'll be *umpire* in all these questions, he has full liberty of *thinking;* the path is beaten before him; he may choose what side he inclines to, or coin new notions of his own. As your church has not yet anathematised nor censured any of these divines, so he needs not turn atheist on these accounts, to purchase the right of *free-thinking*.

But if he's *angry* that all agree not, and thinks it a disgrace to religion, or resolves to meddle with none of them till all are unanimous, he must be put in mind of what he lately mentioned, *the nature of things*. For if he *forbids* thinking on *abstruse* questions, he contradicts his whole book, which asserts men's right and title *to think de quolibet ente;* but if he *allows* them to think on them, diversity of opinions will necessarily follow *from the nature of the things*. For how can men keep the same tract where all walk in the dark? or how can they agree in one story where all tell their own dreams? If men needs will be prying into the hidden mysteries of heaven, they'll certainly court a cloud instead of a goddess: yet such discoverers and projectors there ever will be; and in *divinity*, as well as *geometry*, we have *squarers of the circle*.

XXX.

A second instance of your English clergy's bad conduct, is their owning *the doctrines of the church to be contradictory to one another and to reason*;[i] a III[d], their owning *abuses, defects, and false doctrines in the church*;[j] a IV[th], their professing *that they will not tell the truth*;[k] a V[th], their *charging the most judicious men of their own order with atheism, deism, or socinianism.*[l] Now as these accusations reach no further than some particulars among you, our church here is not in the least, and yours (I think) is not much concerned in them. If the author really has not wronged them (as his usual unfairness gives cause for suspicion), it will be prudence in them to learn even from an enemy, and to speak hereafter with more caution and discretion. All that a stranger can do here, is to leave the persons to their own proper defence; and the supposed *abuses and false doctrines* in your church, to your own either refuting the charge, or remedying the defect. For what would our Lutherans here say of me, if I should pretend to maintain that your church has no blemish at all? Though we justly esteem and honour it next to our own.

XXXI.

But a VI[th] instance of their ill conduct is their *rendering the canon of the Scripture uncertain.*[m] This is a heavy charge indeed; and if they do not clear and vindicate themselves, we, as well as this author, must call them to account. But what's the ground of the indictment? *Why, Dr. Grabe, Dr. Mill, with some others, affirm that no canon was made till above* LX. *years after the death of Christ.* If this be all, he has verified the sentence in the comedy;

Homine imperito numquam quicquam injustiu'st.[*]

For pray, what's the notion of the word *canon?* An entire

[i] Pag. 76. [j] Pag. 79. [k] Pag. 82.

[l] Pag. 85.—[The 12mo ed. (see note, p. 291) has—"atheism, deism, *arianism*, or socinianism," p. 68; and so the French translation, p. 126.—D.]

[m] Pag. 86. [* Ter. *Adelph.* 1. 2. 18.—D.]

collection of the sacred writings, to be a *rule, standard, and system* to Christianity. Now according to those doctors, and the plain matter of fact, all the books of the New Testament were not *written* till the year of Christ XCVII.; and that is *above* LX. *years after the death of Christ.* What sense is there in this complaint then? that the books were not collected before they were made? All the books we now receive for canonical were written* occasionally between the years LII. and XCVII. And during that interval of XLV. years, every book, in the places whither it was sent, or where it was known, was immediately as sacred and canonical as ever it was after. Nor did the church loiter and delay in making a canon or collection of them; for within two years after the writing of St. John's gospel the *evangelical canon* was fixed. And within X. after that, an *epistolical canon* was made: quick enough, if it be considered that they were to be gathered (whither they had been directed) from so many and so distant parts of the world. So that it's plain to me this collector of scraps did not know what a *canon* or collection meant. I'll borrow his argument for one minute, and try it upon some classic authors. It's very plain that Martial published every single book of epigrams by itself; one generally every year; only sometimes he delayed two or three. And so Horace (as your Bentleius has lately shewn†) set out his several books occasionally, from the XXVI. to the LI. year of his life. Now in the reasoning of our acute writer, I'll prove several books of those two authors to be *uncertain* and of dubious authority. For what do you tell me of the first book of the one's *Epigrams*, and of the other's *Satires?* How do I know that those are genuine, when the *canon* of Martial and Horace was not fixed and settled till above XX. years after those are pretended to be written? Is not this argument most strong, cogent, and irrefragable? So very valuable and precious, that, bear witness, I now return it safe and sound to its possessor and author.

[* Written; *1st ed.* "writ."—D.]

[† Bentley's ed. of Horace appeared in 1711.—D.]

XXXII.

Yes! but poor Dr. MILL has still more to answer for; and meets with a sorry recompense for his long labour of xxx. years. For, if we are to believe not only this wise author, but a wiser doctor* of your own, he was *labouring* all that while *to prove the text of the Scripture precarious*;[n] having scraped together such an immense collection of *various readings*, as amount in the whole, by a late author's computation,† to above thirty thousand. Now this is a

[* Whitby,—whose *Examen Var. Lect. Millii*, p. 3, 4, is cited by Collins.—In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291), the author appends to the quotation from Whitby a long note on the question, "whether the numerous various readings do affect the text of Scripture or no," the 4th head of which is as follows: "Though the text of *Scripture* be, like the text of all other ancient books, rendered *uncertain* through the ignorance and negligence of transcribers, and more uncertain than all others through the wilful corruptions of transcribers; yet it is evident, that the more ancient manuscripts there are which remain to us, and the more collations are made of them, the better are *critical Christians* qualified to fix a true text of Scripture for themselves. And by consequence such *critics* as Father Simon and Dr. Bentley ought to be better *believers*, and in a more direct road to salvation, than others who are inferior to them in *criticism*." p. 73.—In the French translation we find the same addition, p. 131; on which Ar. de La Chapelle has bestowed a much longer examination than it deserved, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 213: "La section," says he, "que l'on vient de lire au sujet des *variantes*, auroit dû ramener au bon-sens un homme raisonnable et sincère. Mais comme l'auteur du *Discours*, &c. n'étoit ni l'un ni l'autre sur l'article de la religion, il mit dans son François cette addition, où l'on voit un homme outré de dépit, et qui voulant faire mine de raisonner, ne paye que de colère et d'injures."—D.]

[n] Pag. 88.

[† "*Præf. Nov. Test. Wetstenii*" is the reference given by Collins. He means the ed. published by H. Wetstein in 1711, the editor of which was Gerard von Maestricht.—On the subject of various readings in the *Gr. Test.* see Michaelis's *Introd.* (by Marsh), vol. i. chap. vi. pp. 246-341. ed. 1793.

Hare, in *The Clergyman's Thanks to Phileleutherus* (see note on the Dedicatory Epistle to the Second Part of the *Remarks*), has the following just observations on the present section: "You have, in the small compass of seven leaves, done the work of large volumes, and have set the whole question of *various lections* in so clear and full a light, that nothing more need be said in defence of the text on this account, nothing can be said against it. You have pulled up this panic by the very roots; and a man must be afraid of his own shadow, who can hereafter be in pain about a various reading, or think the number of them any prejudice to the *integrity* or *authority* of the sacred books." p. 34.—D.]

matter of some consequence, and will well deserve a few reflections.

I am forced to confess with grief, that several well-meaning priests, of greater zeal than knowledge, have often by their own false alarms and *panic* both frighted others of their own side, and given advantage to their enemies. What an uproar once was there, as if all were ruined and undone, when Capellus wrote one book* against the antiquity of the *Hebrew points*, and another† for *various lections* in the Hebrew text itself! And yet time and experience has cured them of those imaginary fears; and the great author in his grave has now that honour universally, which the few only of his own age paid him when alive.

The case is and will be the same with your learned countryman Dr. MILL; whose friendship (while I staid at Oxford) and memory will be ever‡ dear to me.§ For what is it that your WHITBYUS|| so inveighs and exclaims at? The doctor's labours, says he, make the whole text precarious, and expose both the reformation to the *papists*, and religion itself to the *atheists*. God forbid! we'll still hope better things. For surely those *various readings* existed before in the several exemplars; Dr. Mill did not make and coin them, he only exhibited them to our view. If religion, therefore, was true before, though such various readings were in

[* *Arcanum Punctationis revelatum, &c.* 4to, 1624.—D.]

[† *Critica sacra, sive de variis quæ in sacris Veteris Testamenti libris occurrunt lectionibus.* Fol. 1650.—D.] [‡ be ever; 1*st ed.* "ever be."—D.]

[§ "At the beginning of 1689 Bentley attended his pupil [James Stillingfleet] to Wadham College, of which he became himself a member, and in the course of that year was incorporated Master of Arts, as holding the same degree in the sister university." Monk's *Life of B.*, vol. i. p. 19.—During his residence at Oxford he was introduced to Dr. Mill, and their acquaintance soon ripened into a warm friendship. See Preface to the present ed. of Bentley's *Works*, vol. i. p. xviii., and the *Epist. ad Millium* in vol. ii. p. 239. Mill died in 1707, about a fortnight after the appearance of his edition of the Greek Test.—D.]

[|| See note, p. 347.—Michaelis observes, that Whitby, though a good commentator, was a bad critic; that he betrays a total ignorance of manuscripts, and had never read with proper attention even Mill's Prolegomena: see *Introd.* (by Marsh), vol. ii. p. 461. ed. 1793.—D.]

being, it will be as true, and consequently as safe still, though every body sees them. Depend on't, no truth, no matter of fact fairly laid open, can ever subvert true religion.

The 30,000 various lections are allowed, then, and confessed: and, if more copies yet are collated, the sum will still mount higher. And what's the inference from this? why, one Gregory, here quoted, infers *that no profane author whatever has suffered so much by the hand of time as the New Testament has done.*[o] Now if this shall be found utterly false; and if the *scriptural text* has no more variations than what must necessarily have happened from *the nature of things*, and what are common and in equal proportion in all classics whatever; I hope this *panic* will be removed, and the text be thought as firm as before.

If there had been but one manuscript of the Greek Testament at the restoration of learning about two centuries ago, then we had had no *various readings* at all. And would the text be in a better condition then than now we have 30,000? So far from that, that in the best single copy extant we should have had hundreds of faults, and some omissions irreparable. Besides that the suspicions of fraud and foul play would have been increased immensely.

It is good, therefore, you'll allow, to have more anchors than one; and another MS. to join with the first would give more authority, as well as security. Now choose that second where you will, there shall be a thousand variations from the first; and yet half or more of the faults shall still remain in them both.

A third therefore, and so a fourth, and still on, are de-

[o] Pag. 88.—["The Reverend Mr. Gregory, of Christ Church, Oxford, says," &c. "Preface to his Posthumous Works."—Dr. John Gregory, author of various learned works, died in 1646. His MS. *Animadversiones* on Malelas, which the curators of the Oxford press originally intended should accompany the ed. of that author in 1691, were afterwards rejected for the *Prolegomena* of Hody, who terms him "omnigena eruditione instructissimus." The expression "one Gregory" does not, I apprehend, imply contempt: Bentley writes in the character of a foreigner, who has no extensive acquaintance with the works of Englishmen.—D.]

sirable, that by a joint and mutual help all the faults may be mended; some copy preserving the true reading in one place, and some in another. And yet the more copies you call to assistance, the more do the various readings multiply upon you; every copy having its peculiar slips, though in a principal passage or two it do singular service. And this is fact, not only in the New Testament, but in all ancient books whatever.

'Tis a good providence and a great blessing, that so many manuscripts of the New Testament are still amongst us; some procured from Egypt, others from Asia, others found in the Western churches. For the very distances of places as well as numbers of the books demonstrate, that there could be no collusion, no altering nor interpolating one copy by another, nor all by any of them.

In profane authors (as they are called), whereof one manuscript only had the luck to be preserved, as Velleius Paterculus among the Latins, and Hesychius among the Greeks, the faults of the scribes are found so numerous, and the defects so beyond all redress, that, notwithstanding the pains of the learnedest and acutest critics for two whole centuries, those books still are,* and are like to continue, a mere heap of errors. On the contrary, where the copies of any author are numerous, though the *various readings* always increase in proportion, there the text, by an accurate collation of them made by skilful and judicious hands, is ever the more correct, and comes nearer to the true words of the author.

Were the very originals of ancient books still in being, those alone would supersede the use of all other copies; but since that was impossible *from the nature of things*, since time and casualties must consume and devour all, the subsidiary help is from the various transcripts conveyed down to us, when examined and compared† together.

Terence is now in one of the best conditions of any of

[* still are; 1*st ed.* "are still."—D.]

[† examined and compared; 1*st ed.* "compared and examined."—D.]

the classic writers; the oldest and best copy of him is now in the Vatican Library, which comes nearest to the poet's own hand; but even that has hundreds of errors, most of which may be mended out of other exemplars, that are otherwise more recent and of inferior value. I myself have collated several;* and do affirm that I have seen 20,000 various lections in that little author, not near so big as the whole *New Testament;* and am morally sure, that if half the number of manuscripts were collated for Terence with that niceness and minuteness which has been used in twice as many for the *New Testament,* the number of the *variations* would amount to above 50,000.

In the manuscripts of the *New Testament* the variations have been noted with a religious, not to say superstitious exactness. Every difference, in spelling, in the smallest particle or article of speech, in the very order or collocation of words without real change, has been studiously registered. Nor has the text only been ransacked, but all the ancient versions, the Latin Vulgate, Italic, Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic, Coptic, Armenian, Gothic, and Saxon; nor these only, but all the dispersed citations of the Greek and Latin fathers in a course of 500 years. What wonder then, if, with all this scrupulous search in every hole and corner, the varieties rise to 30,000? when in all ancient books of the same bulk, whereof the MSS. are numerous, the variations are as many or more, and yet no versions to swell the reckoning.

The editors of profane authors do not use to trouble their readers, or risk their own reputation, by an useless list of every small slip committed by a lazy or ignorant scribe. What is thought commendable in an edition of Scripture, and has the name of fairness and fidelity, would in them be deemed impertinence and trifling. Hence the reader not versed in ancient MSS. is deceived into an opinion, that

[* Bentley was at this time engaged on his ed. of Terence, which circumstances obliged him soon after to lay aside: on the appearance of Hare's ed. in 1724, he earnestly resumed the work; and it was given to the public in 1726: see Monk's *Life of B.*, vol. i. p. 360; vol. ii. p. 217, sqq.—D.]

there were no more variations in the copies than what the editor has communicated. Whereas, if the like scrupulousness was observed in registering the smallest changes in profane authors, as is allowed, nay required, in sacred, the now formidable number of 30,000 would appear a very trifle.

'Tis manifest that books in verse are not near so obnoxious to variations as those in prose;* the transcriber, if he is not wholly ignorant and stupid, being guided by the measures, and hindered from such alterations as do not fall in with the laws of numbers. And yet even in poets the variations are so very many as can hardly be conceived without use and experience. In the late edition of Tibullus† by the learned Mr. Broukhuise you have a register of *various lections* in the close of that book, where you may see, at the first view, that they are as many as the lines. The same is visible in Plautus set out by Pareus. I myself, during my travels, have had the opportunity to examine several MSS. of the poet Manilius;‡ and can assure you that the variations I have met with are twice as many as all the lines of the book. Our Discourser here has quoted nine verses out of it,§ p. 151; in which, though one of the easiest places, I can shew him XIV. various lections. Add likewise, that the MSS. here used were few in comparison: and then do you imagine what the lections would amount to, if ten times as many (the case of Dr. Mill) were accurately examined. And yet in these and all other books the text is not made more *precarious* on that account, but more certain and authentic. So that if I may advise you, when you hear more of this scarecrow of 30,000, be neither astonished at the sum, nor in any pain for the text.

'Tis plain to me that your learned Whitbyus, in his invective against my dead friend, was suddenly surprised with

[* as those in prose; 1*st ed.* "as prose."—D.] [† 1708.—D.]

[‡ As early as 1691 Bentley was preparing an ed. of Manilius: see Monk's *Life of B.*, vol. i. p. 34; and the author's preface to the *Dissert. on Phalaris*, vol. i. p. xxvii. sqq. of the present ed. of his *Works*. It was not published till 1739.—D.]

[§ Lib. i. 522. "Omnia mortali mutantur," &c.—D.]

a *panic*; and, under his deep concern for the *text*, did not reflect at all what that word really means. The present text was first settled almost 200 years ago out of several MSS. by Robert Stephens, a printer and bookseller at Paris; whose beautiful and (generally speaking) accurate edition* has been ever since counted the standard, and followed by all the rest. Now this specific *text* in your doctor's notion seems taken for the sacred original in every word and syllable; and if the conceit is but spread and propagated, within a few years that *printer's* infallibility will be as zealously maintained as an *evangelist's* or *apostle's*.

Dr. MILL, were he alive, would confess to your doctor, that this *text* fixed by a printer is sometimes by the various readings rendered *uncertain*, nay is proved certainly wrong. But then he would subjoin, that the real text of the sacred writers† does not now (since the originals have been so long lost) lie in any single MS. or edition, but is dispersed in them all. 'Tis competently exact indeed even in the worst MS. now extant; nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost in them; choose as awkwardly as you can, choose the worst by design, out of the whole lump of readings. But the lesser matters of diction, and among several synonymous expressions the very words of the writer, must be found out by the same industry and sagacity that is used in other books; must not be risked upon the credit of any particular MS. or edition, but be sought, acknowledged, and challenged, wherever they are met with.

Stephens followed what he found in the King of France's copies, *Acts*, xxvii. 14. ἄνεμος τυφωνικὸς, ὁ καλούμενος *ΕΥΡΟΚΛΥΔΩΝ*; and he is followed by your translators, *there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called EUROCLYDON*. This reading, perhaps, your learned doctor would not have now be made *precarious*:‡ but if that printer had

[* Stephens' first ed. appeared in 1546, 12mo: his fol. ed. in 1550.—D.]

[† writers; so 1*st ed.*; ed. 1743, "writer."—D.]

[‡ "Mr. Bentley," says Ar. de la Chapelle, "ne rend pas ici une justice parfaite à Mr. Whitby." *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 195.—See Whitby ad l.—D.]

had the use of your Alexandrian MS., which exhibits here *ΕΤΡΑΚΤΑΩΝ*, it's very likely he would have given it the preference in his text; and then the doctor, upon his own principle, must have stickled for this.

The wind *euroclydon* was never heard of but here: it's compounded of εὖρος and κλύδων, the *wind* and the *waves;* and it seems plain *a priori* from the disparity of those two ideas, that they could not be joined in one compound; nor is there any other example of the like composition.

But εὐρακύλων, or as the vulgar Latin here has it, *euroaquilo* (approved by Grotius and others), is so apposite to the context, and to all the circumstances of the place, that it may fairly challenge admittance as the word of St. Luke.* 'Tis true, according to Vitruvius, Seneca, and Pliny, who make *eurus* to blow from the winter solstice, and *aquilo* between the summer solstice and the north point, there can be no such wind nor word as *euroaquilo*, because the *solanus* or *apheliotes* from the cardinal point of east comes between them. But *eurus* is here to be taken, as Gellius, ii. 22, and the Latin poets use it, for the middle equinoctial east, the same as *solanus;* and then in the table of the XII.† winds according to the ancients, between the two cardinal winds *septentrio* and *eurus* there are two at stated distances, *aquilo* and καικίας. The Latins had no *known name for* καικίας: *Quem ab oriente solstitiali excitatum Græci* καικίαν *vocant, apud nos sine nomine est,* says Seneca, *Nat. Quæst.* v. 16.‡ Καικίας, therefore, blowing between *aquilo* and *eurus*, the Roman seamen (for want of a specific word) might express the same wind by the compound name *euroaquilo*, in the same analogy as the Greeks call εὐρόνοτος the middle wind between *eurus* and *notus*, and as you§ say now *south-*

[* Few readers probably require to be informed that this text has exercised the learning and ingenuity of a series of critics; and that the common lection εὐροκλύδων has been satisfactorily defended.—D.]

[† of the XII.; 1*st ed.* "of XII."—D.]

[‡ In citing this passage, Bentley has added "*Quem,*" and substituted "*vocant*" for "appellant."—D.]

[§ you; 1*st. ed.* "we."—D.]

east and *north-east*. Since, therefore, we have now found that *euroaquilo* was the Roman mariners' word for the Greek *καικίας*, there will soon appear a just reason why St. Luke calls it *ἄνεμος τυφωνικὸς*, *a tempestuous wind, vorticosus*, a whirling wind; for that's the peculiar character of *καικίας* in those climates; as appears from several authors, and from that known proverbial verse,

*Ἕλκων ἐφ' αὑτὸν ὡς ὁ καικίας νέφη.**

So that, with submission, I think our Luther's and the Danish version have done more right than your English to the sacred text, by translating it NORD-OST, *north-east*; though, according to the present compass divided into XXXII., *euroaquilo* answers nearest to OST-NORD-OST, *east-north-east*; which is the very wind that would directly drive the ship from Crete to the African Syrtis, according to the pilot's fears, in the 17th verse.

The Alexandrian copy, then, though it has vastly increased the number of readings, as you see in your Polyglot and Dr. Mill's edition, has been of excellent use here; and so in many other places; retrieving to us the true original, where other copies failed. And what damage if all the other copies of near the same antiquity, which Mr. Montfaucon has discovered, and Dr. Mill never saw, were sometime collated as exactly, and all the varieties published, let the thousands grow never so many?

When the doctor is so alarmed at the vast sum of 30,000, he seems to take it for granted, that within that number the very original is every where found; and the only complaint is, that true are so blended with false, that they can hardly be discovered. If that were the only difficulty, some abler heads than ours would soon find a remedy: in the mean time I can assure him, that if that be the case, the *New Testament* has suffered *less injury by the hand of time than any profane*

[* This verse, which Bentley has slightly corrected, occurs in the Schol. on Aristoph. *Equit.* 435, in Plutarch, &c. &c. See Wyttenbach's note on Plut. *De Cap. ex inim. util.*—*Mor.* t. vi. p. 304, ed. 4to.—D.]

author, there being not one ancient book besides it in the world, that, with all the help of various lections (be they 50,000 if you will) does not stand in further want of emendation by true critic; nor is there one good edition of any that has not inserted into the text (though every reader knows it not) what no manuscript vouches.*

'Tis plain indeed, that if emendations are true, they must have once been in some manuscripts, at least in the author's original; but it does not follow, that because no manuscript now exhibits them, none more ancient ever did. Slips and errors (while the art of printing was unknown) grew presently and apace, even while the author was alive. Martial tells us himself, how one of his admirers was so curious, that he sent a copy of his poems, which he had bought, to be *emended*[p] by his own hand. And we certainly know from Gellius,[q] that even so early as Hadrian's time and before, the common copies of Virgil had several mistakes.

Not frighted, therefore, with the present 30,000, I for my part, and (as I believe) many others, would not lament, if out of the old manuscripts yet untouched 10,000 more were faithfully collected: some of which without question would render the text more beautiful, just, and exact, though of no

[* Hare, in *The Clergyman's Thanks to Phileleutherus* (see note on the Dedicatory Epistle to the Second Part of the *Remarks*), has the following passage: "That the present text wants the help of more manuscripts than have yet been examined, or the assistance of *critic* to supply the want of them, is not only *a priori* evident from the reason and nature of the thing; those who have read the New Testament with a critical care and exactness know it to be so in fact: yourself have given us a small specimen of this in your happy conjectures upon three passages [see pp. 357, 8], which, as far as I can find by my own conversation and my friends, are universally liked by the men of learning, who would be very glad so great a master would turn his labours to the Scriptures; and if not a new edition of the Testament, that he would give us at least a *critice sacra* on it, which, from so able a hand, would on many accounts be infinitely valuable. Many of us are sensible this wants to be done, though none of us can do it; the province is yours without dispute, 'twill be our part to judge and to applaud." p. 38.—Hare's pamphlet is dated March 1713. In a letter to Archbishop Wake, April 1716, Bentley announced his design of publishing an edition of the Greek Test.—D.]

[p] Martial, vii. 11. [q] Gellius, i. 21; ix. 14.

consequence to the main of religion, nay perhaps wholly synonymous in the view of common readers, and quite insensible in any modern version.

If all those remaining manuscripts were diligently perused, perhaps one might find in some or one of them a new various lection in 1 *Tim.* vi. 3. *εἴ τις ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖ, καὶ μὴ ΠΡΟΣΕΡΧΕΤΑΙ ὑγιαίνουσι λόγοις τοῖς τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.* For though the sense of *προσέρχεται* is so fixed by the adjacent words that no version has mistaken it, *consents not to, acquiesces not in, the wholesome words of our Saviour;* yet the propriety does not appear in the original, no example of that phrase having yet been given. If some manuscript, then, should have it *προσέχεται* or *προσίχεται, cleaves and adheres to the wholesome words,* who has reason to be angry at that variation? But I should sooner expect to find *ΠΡΟΣΕΧΕΙ,* because *προσέχειν λόγοις, to give heed, attend, observe, listen, obey,* is a known phrase as well in sacred as profane authors. So 2 *Peter,* i. 19. *ᾧ (λόγῳ) καλῶς προσέχοντες. Prov.* i. 24. *ἐξέτεινον λόγους, καὶ οὐ προσείχετε. Jer.* vi. 19. *τοῖς λόγοις μου οὐ προσέσχον.* So in other places of the LXX. *προσέχειν ῥήσει, ῥήμασι, νόμῳ, ἐντολαῖς.* So to the same effect, *Acts,* viii. 6. *προσέχειν τοῖς λεγομένοις.* xvi. 14. *τοῖς λαλουμένοις. Heb.* ii. 1. *τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσι. Tit.* i. 14. *μύθοις.* And lastly it is joined with the same word *ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν,* 1 *Tim.* i. 4. *μὴ ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν· μηδὲ ΠΡΟΣΕΧΕΙΝ μύθοις καὶ γενεαλογίαις.* If a search, therefore, was made in the manuscripts abroad, and this lection should chance to be found there, what detriment would it bring either to the authority or beauty of the text?

In the epistle of Jude, ver. 18, the general sense is clear and palpable; *Mockers in the last time, κατὰ τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἐπιθυμίας πορευόμενοι τῶν ἀσεβειῶν, who walk after their own ungodly lusts.* But if one of those manuscripts instead of *ἀσεβειῶν* should exhibit *ΑΣΕΛΓΕΙΩΝ, lascivious, wanton, filthy lusts;* as those two words are joined 1 *Pet.* iv. 3. *πεπορευμένους ἐν ἀσελγείαις, ἐπιθυμίαις, who walked in*

lasciviousness and lusts; and 2 *Pet.* ii. 18. *ἐν ἐπιθυμίαις σαρκὸς, ἀσελγείαις, the lusts of the flesh and wantonness;* though the sense of both may perhaps be equivalent, yet it's not nothing to add a justness and propriety of expression.

Once more;* in a passage of St. James, v. 6, where, after he had denounced wrath and judgment against the *rich* and *proud,* he thus concludes, *κατεδικάσατε, ἐφονεύσατε τὸν δίκαιον· οὐκ ἀντιτάσσεται ὑμῖν, ye have condemned and killed the just: he doth not resist you:* if instead of *ΟΥΚ* some manuscript, by the change of one letter, should represent *ΟΚΣ*, which in the ancient books is always so abbreviated for *Ὁ Κύριος, the Lord,* some persons would not be sorry, if what has hitherto appeared to all interpreters abrupt, incoherent, and forced, should with so slight a change be made pertinent and proper: *the* LORD *resists, opposes, sets himself against you.* For so St. James speaks before, iv. 6, and St. Peter, 1 epist. v. 5, out of *Prov.* iii. 34. *Ὁ ΘΕΟΣ ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται,* GOD *opposeth the proud.* And then the connexion is apt and just in the following verse; *μακροθυμήσατε ΟΥΝ, be patient* THEREFORE, *brethren, unto the coming τοῦ ΚΥ, of the Lord;* exactly as St. Peter's is in the place already cited: *for* GOD *resisteth the proud: humble yourselves* THEREFORE *under the mighty hand of* GOD.

But to return to our Discourser, and to close up this long *remark;* it is fact undeniable, that the sacred books have suffered *no more alterations than common and classic authors;* it has been the common sense of men of letters, that numbers of manuscripts do not make a text *precarious,* but are useful, nay necessary to its establishment and certainty. And as Scaliger, Casaubon, Heinsius, &c., when they designed to publish a correct edition of an author, first laboured to procure all the manuscripts they could hear of, as the only means that promised laudable success; so Stephanus, Junius,

[* Concerning the emendations of the New Test. proposed by Bentley in the *Remarks* and elsewhere, Wetstein has observed, "vereor ut sint tam certæ quam sunt ingeniosæ." *Proleg.* p. 155.—D.]

Curcellæus, Walton, Fell, and Mill proceeded in the same method. All these, except Stephens the printer, were Christian *priests;* and what, pray, were they doing with all this pains and labour? Why, according to our wise author, they were confounding their own scheme. Very magisterial and decisive! And yet the comfort is, that in his courteous distribution of all mankind into *knaves* and *fools*, he can neither accuse the *clergy* here as playing their *priestcraft*, nor, without involving with them the most learned of the *laity*, turn them over to his second row of *crackbrained* and *idiots*.

The result of the whole is, that either *a posteriori* all ancient books, as well as the sacred, must now be laid aside as *uncertain and precarious;* or else to say *a priori*, that all the transcripts of sacred books should have been privileged against the common fate, and exempted from all slips and errors whatever. Which of these our writer and his *new sect* will close with, I cannot foresee: there's in each of them such a gust of the *paradox* and *perverse*, that they equally suit with a modern *free-thinker's* palate; and therefore I shall here bestow a short reflection on both.

If all the old authors are abandoned by him, there is one compendious answer to this *Discourse of Free-thinking*. For what becomes of his boasted passages out of Cicero, Plutarch, and his long list of ancient *free-thinkers*, if the *text* of each is *precarious?* those passages, as they came from the author's hands, might be *for* superstition, which are now cited *against* it. Thus our writer will be found *felo de se;* unless the coroner, to save his effects, favours him with his own titles of *fool* and *madman*.

But I have too much value for the ancients to play booty about their works and monuments, for the sake of a short answer *to a fool according to his folly*. All those passages, and all the rest of their remains, are sufficiently pure and genuine to make us sure of the writer's design. If a corrupt line or dubious reading chances to intervene, it does not darken the whole context, nor make an author's opinion or

his purpose *precarious*. Terence, for instance, has as many variations as any book whatever, in proportion to its bulk; and yet, with all its interpolations, omissions, additions, or glosses (choose the worst of them on purpose), you cannot deface the contrivance and plot of one play; no, not of one single scene; but its sense, design, and subserviency to the last issue and conclusion, shall be visible and plain thorow all the mist of *various lections*. And so it is with the sacred text; make your 30,000 as many more, if numbers of copies can ever reach that sum: all the better to a knowing and serious reader, who is thereby more richly furnished to select what he sees genuine. But even put them into the hands of a knave or a fool, and yet, with the most sinistrous and absurd choice, he shall not extinguish the light of any one chapter, nor so disguise Christianity but that every feature of it will still be the same.

And this has already prevented the last shift and objection, that sacred books at least, books imposed upon the world as divine laws and revelations, should have been exempted from the injuries of time, and secured from the least change. For what need of that perpetual miracle, if, with all the present changes, the whole Scripture is perfect and sufficient to all the great ends and purposes of its first writing? What a scheme would these men make! what worthy rules would they prescribe to Providence! That in millions of copies transcribed in so many ages and nations, all the notaries and writers, who made it their trade and livelihood, should be infallible and impeccable? That their pens should spontaneously write true, or be supernaturally guided, though the scribes were nodding or dreaming? would not this exceed all the miracles of both Old and New Testament? And, pray, to what great use or design? To give satisfaction to a few obstinate and untractable wretches; to those who are not convinced by *Moses and the prophets*, but want *one from the dead* to come and convert them. Such men mistake the methods of Providence, and the very fundamentals of religion; which draws its votaries by the *cords of*

a man, by rational, ingenuous, and moral motives; not by conviction mathematical; not by new evidence miraculous, to silence every doubt and whim that impiety and folly can suggest. And yet all this would have no effect upon such spirits and dispositions: if they now believe not Christ and his apostles, *neither would they believe* if their own schemes were complied with.

XXXIII.

But Dr. MILL is not yet dismissed: *for he has discovered a passage very little known before*;[r] with which this author hopes, not *to do any good*, but a great deal of mischief. But why, I pray, *discovered?* and why *very little known?* Has not the passage been twice printed in Victor above a hundred years? and a third time above half a hundred? and over and over in Isidorus's *Chronicon?* We'll allow it was *very little known* to this author and his sect before; but let them not measure all others by their own narrow and partial inquiries.

Nay, but even *Father Simon, who has laboured so much to prove the uncertainty of the text of Scripture*,[s] did not light on this passage. Our writer has found out, you see, Father Simon's covered design; a true piece of *popish priestcraft*, to confound the reformation by labouring to prove the sacred text precarious: and this avowed enemy to all priests and priestcraft concurs openly with that papist in his pious intention. Now what shall we say or think of this conduct? You that live upon the spot, pray inquire into the men. Was not one* of the heads of them a *papist*, in the time of your late King James? Such a story goes here at Leipsic; and really a stranger would be tempted to think that *popery* rather than *atheism* is the secret cabbala of this *new sect*. For why such zeal for bare atheism, if nothing more was

[r] Pag. 90. [s] Pag. 90.

[* Dr. Matthew Tindal, who had declared himself a Roman Catholic in the reign of James II., but had afterwards renounced that religion. See *Biog. Brit.* In sect. XLI. he is again noticed by Bentley as a free-thinking *doctor*.—D.]

behind the scene? There is no principle, no spur in mere atheism, to make any man act as they do. They confess that the modern *free-thinkers are sure to be hated by* 999 *out of a* 1000.[t] Why, then, must this universal hatred be voluntarily incurred by an atheist? Why must he expose himself by his talking and printing? To do *himself* good? The very contrary; for if your priests were really such as this writer has described them, his very life would not be worth a month's purchase. Or to do *others* good? Nothing less; for what harm in his scheme if men live and die *Christians?* He cannot tell them they'll be *damned* for it after death; he can only aim, if men *live* not wickedly enough already, to invite and encourage them to live worse. A mighty friend this to himself, and to human society.

But take now a mixture of *popery* into the scheme of this *new sect*, and all their odd steps may be accounted for. 'Tis most certain in fact, that to propagate atheism in protestant countries has been a method prescribed and made use of by popish emissaries. For they do no *evil* by it in their notion; the men that would have been damned for *heresy*, are no worse damned for *atheism:* but the *good* of the thing lies open to full view; when infidelity and an indifference to all religion (and some there must and ever will be) must needs pave a plain way for the return of popery, while zeal and flame are all on one side, and coldness and mere ice on the other. Let these authors look to it, then; and let your government look to them. They may take their option of one of their own epithets: if *popery* is the drift of their sect (as they really serve its interests), they may claim the favour* to be placed among *the designing and artificial knaves;* but if naked *atheism* is all they aim at, they are certainly turned over without *benefit of clergy* to the *crazy, crackbrained,* and *idiots*.

And now for the passage in Victor's *Chronicon*, with our author's faithful translation:

Messalla V. C. Coss. Constantinopoli, jubente Anas-

[t] Pag. 120. [* claim the favour; 1*st ed.* "claim favour."—D.]

tasio imperatore, sancta evangelia, tamquam ab idiotis evangelistis composita, reprehenduntur et emendantur.

In the consulship of MESSALLA, *at the command of the emperor* ANASTASIUS, *the holy gospels, as written by idiot evangelists,* are corrected and amended.*

Our writer introduces this passage with a triumphant remark; that it was done *in the* VI^th^ *century,* and recorded by one who *flourished in that very age.* Now this is to possess the unwary reader that Victor reports this matter as within his own knowledge and memory. But Messalla was consul in the west A.D. DVI.; and this little *Chronicon* of a dozen pages, which might be written in as short a time† as my letter here, ends A.D. DLXVI. So that this might be nothing but a hearsay about a business supposed to be done threescore years before.

Ab idiotis evangelistis, *by idiot evangelists,* says our author; who, if he's sincere in this version, proves himself a very *idiot* in the Greek and Latin acceptation of that word. *Ἰδιώτης, idiota, illiteratus, indoctus, rudis.* See Du Fresne in his Glossaries, who takes notice, that *idiota* for an *idiot* or *natural fool* is peculiar to your English law; for which he cites Rastal. Did Victor, therefore, mean *idiot evangelists* in your English sense? No; but *illiterate, unlearned.* What then must we think of our author for his scandalous translation here? whether imputation will he choose to lie under, that he knew the meaning of Victor, or that he knew it not?

As for the fact itself, *a general alteration of the* IV. *gospels in the* VI^th^ *century;*[u] though I have no high opinion of

[* In the later 8vo ed. of the *Discourse*, p. 90, (see note, p. 290) we find "as written *idiotis evangelistis;*" and in the 12mo ed. "as written by *ignorant* evangelists," p. 74, with this note at the foot of the page, "*Phileleutherus Lipsiensis's Remarks on the Disc. of Free-thinking*, p. 84."—When Dr. Lort, in a correspondence with a Mr. Prichard (Nichols's *Lit. Anec.* vol. ii. p. 677), mentions a copy in which the words "*by idiot evangelists*" were *omitted*, he means, I presume, left untranslated. It is remarkable that, notwithstanding these alterations in the English editions, the French translation has "*écrits par des évangélistes qui étoient des idiots.*" p. 133.—D.]

[† short a time; 1*st ed.* "short time."—D.]

[u] Pag. 90.

our author's penetration, I dare venture to say he himself does not believe it. Dr. MILL has taught him better; whose words he has honestly suppressed here; he that makes it one article against your clergy, their *stifling of passages, and mangling of books.*[v] *'Tis as certain,* says the doctor, *as certain can be, that no such altered gospels were ever made public. What tumults, what tragedies would they have raised! They would have cost that hated emperor his crown and his life. The fact would have been spoken of and detested by all the historians, and not to be found only* (as it is; for Isidore professes to take it from Victor) *in one blind passage of a puny chronicle.*[w]

Add to these reasons of my dead friend, that we have plain demonstration no such *altered gospels* obtained in the world; as this writer would insinuate. For we have the Fathers of IV. whole centuries before that time, both in the Greek and Latin church; among all whom there's scarce a verse in the New Testament uncited: the agreement of which with the MSS. yet extant does fully evince that the copies continued the same after Anastasius's time as before. Add the entire commentaries of Austin, Jerome, Chrysostom, Cyril, Theodoret, and more, all dead before the VI^th^ century commenced; and yet their *text* is the same as now, and their explications so confirm and fix it, that that could not be altered in their books (as is supposed in the naked Scripture) without making the commentaries anew. Add again the Latin Italic and Jerome's versions; add others in the east, all before the date of this pretended *general alteration:* and he must be a mere *idiot* indeed that can believe that story, when he sees all those antecedent books so exactly agree with the subsequent.

That this *general alteration* is a mere dream and *chimera,*

[v] Pag. 95, 96.

[w] Millii Proleg. p. 98.—["Mais," says Ar. de la Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 229, "la bonnefoi qui auroit dû obliger Collins à ne pas supprimer ces paroles, m'oblige à donner les précédentes, qui ont pu contribuer considérablement à faire tomber dans l'erreur l'auteur du Discours, &c. *Unde hæc desumpserit auctor iste,*" &c. &c.—D.]

may be known even *a priori* by any man of common sense. For if the thing was really effected, and the very Bibles of Victor and Isidore (with all the rest) were so altered and corrupted beyond retrieve, what could those men mean to transmit that fact to posterity? Or what copier would not have *stifled those passages* in them both? Suppose, in our *free-thinker's* scheme, that all the world at that time were *knaves* and *fools* enough to comply with it: yet surely they would not have told it us; they would not have branded themselves to all ages; not so have abused the *evangelists*, whom they looked upon as inspired; not rooted up and *destroyed** that religion, which this very pretended fact designed to *recommend*.

Our modest writer, who affirms of himself *that he* MUST *be one of the most understanding and virtuous men alive*,[x] has given no good instance of either in his management of this passage; for he has left out a principal word, both in his Latin and English, and which MILL as well as Victor laid before his eyes, that will clear up this whole affair. CONSTANTINOPOLI, at CONSTANTINOPLE, says Victor, *the gospels were amended*. Was this a *general alteration?* Did this involve the whole Christian world? Would Theodoric, then reigning in the west, have submitted to this order of Anastasius, a weak and unpopular prince, that was scarce obeyed by his own guards? But the story itself pretends to no more than the city of the emperor's residence: and if our author did not see this, where was his *understanding?* if he did, and *stifled* the word by design, where was his *virtue?*

[* have told it us; they would not have branded themselves to all ages; not so have abused the *evangelists*, whom they looked upon as inspired; not rooted up and *destroyed*; 1*st ed.* "told us it; they would not have branded themselves to all ages; not so abused the *evangelists*, whom they looked on as inspired; not root up and *destroy*."—D.]

[x] Pag. 120.—["It is objected, *that free-thinkers themselves are the most infamous, wicked, and senseless of all mankind*. . . . In answer to it, therefore, I observe:

"1. That men who use their understandings must have more sense than they who use them not; and this I take to be self-evident. And as to the other part of the objection, I assert, that *free-thinkers* must, as such, be the most virtuous persons every where," &c.—D.]

You see the matter dwindles to nothing, even allowing the whole fact in Victor's meaning to be true. But I can never believe so wicked and senseless a thought of that emperor, or any Christian whatever. He was hated indeed universally, for adhering to heretics, and for his ill conduct in civil government; and so any story was entertained with joy that would make him still more odious, and blacken his character. But I fancy I can give you a clear account of the occasion and rise of this scandal out of Liberatus the Deacon, of the same age and country with Victor, in the XIX^th^ chapter of his *Breviarium*.*

Hoc tempore Macedonius Constantinopolitanus episcopus ab imperatore Anastasio dicitur expulsus, tamquam evangelia falsasset, et maxime illud apostoli dictum, *qui apparuit in carne, justificatus est in Spiritu.* Hunc enim immutasse, ubi habet *OΣ*, id est QUI, monosyllabum Græcum; litera mutata *O* in *Θ* vertisse, et fecisse *ΘΣ*, id est ut esset, DEUS *apparuit per carnem.* Tamquam Nestorianus ergo culpatus expellitur per Severum Monachum.

The editions of Liberatus, instead of *Θ* and *ΘΣ*, have *Ω* and *ΩΣ*; but it appears from Baronius, that the manuscript had no Greek letters here at all, and that they were supplied by the first editor. I have not scrupled, therefore, to correct the place as the Latin clearly requires; for DEUS answers to *ΘΕΟΣ*, and the Greek *monosyllable OΣ* is in opposition to that *dissyllable.* And so Hincmarus in his *Opusculum*, chap. xviii., where he recites the same story (without doubt out of Liberatus), has it plainly, as I have put it, *O in Θ vertit et fecit ΘΣ.*

The account is this: *Macedonius, patriarch of Constantinople, was charged by the emperor Anastasius as a falsary, that had altered and interpolated several passages of the New Testament in the copies used in that city; and particularly*

[* "Cet ouvrage a été donné par le P. Garnier en 1675. Il est aussi dans le v. tome de la dernière collection des Conciles." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 235.—Concerning Liberatus, see Cave's *Script. Eccles. Hist. Lit.* t. i. p. 527, ed. 1740.—D.]

that in the 1 Tim. iii. 16, *he had ordered ΘΣ to be written instead of OΣ; and for that crime of falsification he was deprived and banished.*

Macedonius might really do this; and where any copies had it *OΣ*, he might order to correct it *ΘΣ* by a small stroke of the pen. That the copies did vary here of old is most certain;* and there's one in the Colbertin library that has it *OΣ* at this day. But 'tis as certain that Macedonius was not the first introducer of that reading; many ancient fathers citing and explaining it *ΘΣ*, before he was born.

Now any reader, I presume, even our author himself will grant me, that if Macedonius was banished for falsifying those copies, Anastasius would give orders to have the true readings (in his opinion) restored, and that all the copies in Constantinople should be sought for and *amended.*

And here, if I mistake not, is the whole ground and rise of the story in Victor. For the true fact being no more than this, that Anastasius ordered the *copies* to be amended, tamquam ab idiotis librariis conscripta, *as written by ignorant scribes;* the story grew in the telling, when it was got as far as Afric, on purpose to blacken him, that he ordered the *originals* to be amended, tamquam ab idiotis evangelistis composita, *as made by ignorant evangelists.*

It does not lessen the probability of this, that Victor speaks only of *evangelia, the gospels;* for that's the word both in Liberatus and Hincmare, EVANGELIA *falsasset*, even where they specify the Epistle to Timothy. So that *gospels*, in the common acceptation of those times, were meant of the whole *New Testament.*

But I think the probability is much increased by this obvious reflection, that no one author tells both these stories: Victor, who has transmitted down the greater reproach, says not a word of the less; and Liberatus, who has published the fairer story, is silent about the blasphemous one. So that in their first original they were but one and the same.

TANTUM.

[* See the notes of Wetstein and Griesbach ad l.—D.]

HONOURED SIR,

You will see all along in my letter, without my telling it now, that I designed to have despatched at once all my observations upon this famous treatise. But finding myself here in his xc[th] page, the very middle of the book, and my Remarks having so grown under my hands, that they are already full heavy enough for the post, I choose to make up this present packet, and leave the rest to another occasion. I myself am of opinion, that this half is as much as the whole: the author's virtues and abilities, his honesty and his learning, are made already as apparent as even a second letter can make them; for his whole *Discourse* is but one uniform series of insincerity and ignorance, of juggle and blunder. However, if I understand that this letter has come safe to your hands, and that another would be serviceable to religion, or acceptable to the *English clergy*, for whose honour, though a foreigner, I have the greatest regard, you may certainly command

Your most obedient, humble servant,

PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS.

Leipsic, Jan. 26.
New style.

REMARKS

UPON A LATE

DISCOURSE OF FREE-THINKING:

IN

A LETTER TO F. H., D.D.

BY

PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS.

PART THE SECOND.

(From ed. 1743.)

TO

MY VERY LEARNED AND HONOURED FRIEND

F. H., D.D.*

AT LONDON, GREAT BRITAIN.

SIR,

THE account you was pleased to send me of your publishing my former *Remarks*, and of the kind reception they found among your countrymen, especially your *clergy*,† to whose

[* See note, p. 289.—Immediately on the appearance of the First Part of the present work, Hare put forth a pamphlet entitled *The Clergyman's Thanks to Phileleutherus for his Remarks on the late Discourse of Free-thinking. In a Letter to Dr. Bentley—Fungor vice cotis*—8vo, pp. 48, subscribed "your unknown admirer and humble servant, Philo-Criticus." In this tract, which is written with considerable ability, Hare does not confine his applause to the *Remarks*, but lavishes the most unqualified praise on the other performances of "the universal genius," Bentley,—the *Emendationes in Menandrum*, the edition of Horace, &c. At a later period of their lives, as the reader is probably aware, circumstances occurred which dissolved the friendship of Hare and Bentley; and when the *Works* of the former were published after his death, in four vols. 1746, the pamphlet in question was omitted, being ridiculously at variance with another piece in the second volume of the collection, the *Epistola Critica* to Bland, which is a bitter and elaborate attack on Bentley's edition of Phædrus, and in which those very writings of the great scholar, so extravagantly lauded in *The Clergyman's Thanks, &c.*, are noticed with contempt.—D.]

[† "If," says Hare, "the Remarks of Phileleutherus upon the late Discourse of *Free-thinking* had been confined to the private hand they are addressed to, the learned and ingenious author could have expected the thanks due for so noble a performance from no other quarter; but since those excellent Remarks have had the justice done them to be made public, and instead of serving to the instruction of a few, have been read with pleasure and improvement by all, all I mean who have any interest in the services done to learning and religion, their author has a right to the thanks of all. And as every honest *clergyman* may, without vanity, reckon himself in that number, I take leave publicly to make him this acknowledgment in my own name, and in that of many others; and to assure him that his performance has met with the reception it deserves, and is universally esteemed by the serious and virtuous men of all parties, particularly by the *clergy* (for it is in that quality I write), without distinction;

honour and service they were peculiarly dedicated, was very agreeable. I am sensible that, before my papers could come to your hands, there must have been several better answers of your own product at home. If mine, therefore, was read with such distinction as you speak of, I must impute that good fortune to nothing else than your known national humour of admiring foreign commodities, though you have better of your native growth. 'Tis a favourable error, how-

and that nothing is more impatiently desired than that the same hand would oblige them with a *Second* Part, and complete the work. For though, as the judicious author has observed, *the half be as much as the whole*, to some purposes; yet when we find so much both of pleasure and advantage in half, he must excuse us if we can't but be very desirous of the whole. I say pleasure and advantage both; for as we are all pleased, so the most learned of us is not ashamed to own that he is instructed also by the Remarks of so able and excellent a pen. And what makes the *Second Part* still more desired, is, that the remaining part of *Free-thinking* seems to afford Phileleutherus a larger field for displaying that wonderful *critic*, of which he is so great a master.

"But why do I say this to you? What is Phileleutherus Lipsiensis to our English Bentley? Or how will writing to one procure what is desired of the other? This indeed is a question that might be asked where the true author has reason to conceal himself, or is obscure enough to do it effectually if he would; but neither of these suppositions have any place here. Phileleutherus Lipsiensis, we are sure, is a feigned name; and under such a name some writers, did they choose to hide themselves, might do it with great ease, especially if they could *personam sustinere*, and keep up the feigned character throughout with that exactness, which, it must be confessed, has been observed in these Remarks. But the abilities of some very few men are so distinguishing, that unless they will hide their talents as well as their names, and write below themselves, under all disguises they will be known as certainly as by their names. 'Tis in vain a writer endeavours to conceal himself, when he is allowed by all to have no equal in his way; and why should he desire it, when the more his performance is known, the more honour he is sure 'twill do him? Give me leave therefore, learned sir, without more ceremony, *personam detrahere*, and, since it will be no discovery, to call you by your name; for every body, I assure you, is beforehand with me: and though Dr. Bentley may *personate*, if he please, a *foreigner*, we are all, for the honour of our country, ready to own that no *foreigner* can personate him." . . . . . .

"Your remarks are read by all, and admired as much as read: to the clergy in particular nothing can be more acceptable than what is so serviceable to religion; and if the universal esteem with which they have been received can create an obligation, we think we have a right to more from the same hand." *The Clergyman's Thanks, &c.* pp. 3, 4, 5, 47.—D.]

ever, and we strangers often fare the better for it. But I am concerned that, when every thing else pleased you, my declaration at the close, *that the half of my Remarks was as much as the whole*, could not merit your approbation. Why do you thus press and teaze me, both against my inclination and interest, to continue those papers? You acknowledge enough is already said to silence both the book and the author, both himself and the whole *sect*. You inform me that he has fled the pit;* that all his character for sense and learning is forfeited and dead: and if so, why impose upon me that useless cruelty of molesting him in his grave? I may add, too, a prudential view: I should stake what I have already won against nothing at all. If another Part succeeds as well as the first, I acquire no new reputation; if it does not, I lose even the old. Besides, the subject itself is altered: the former part of his book contained matters of consequence, and gave some play to an answerer; but the latter is a dull heap of citations, not worked nor cemented together, mere sand without lime: and who would meddle with such dry mouldering stuff, that with the best handling can never take a polish? To produce a good reply, the first writer must contribute something: if he is quite low and flat, his antagonist cannot rise high; if he is barren and jejune, the other cannot flourish; if he is obscure and dark, the other can never shine. And then you know my long law-suit here,† which is now removed to Dresden; and who would regard the *free-thinkers*,‡ or willingly jade his own parts, under such clogs and impediments? I find, when I set pen to paper, that I sink below my own level: *Quærit se ingenium, nec invenit.* But if you'd had patience till my trial was over (for

[* "The least appearance of danger is able to damp in a moment all their *free-thinking* zeal. A bare inquiry after the printer of their wicked book has frightened them, and obliged the reputed author to take a *second* trip into Holland; so great is his courage to defend upon the first appearance of an opposition." *The Clergyman's Thanks, &c.* p. 18.—See note, p. 371.—D.]

[† An allusion to the college prosecution; of which the reader will find a minute account in Dr. Monk's *Life of Bentley*.—D.]

[‡ *free-thinkers: so 1st ed.* Ed. 1743, "*free-thinker*."—D.]

trial in my cause is the same as victory), then, perhaps, your *growing sect* might have felt to their cost,

Et nos tela, pater, ferrumque haud debile dextrâ
*Spargimus, et nostro sequitur de vulnere sanguis.**

And yet, after so many good reasons why I ought now to lie still, see the power you have over me, when you both urge a promise, and back it with the desire of the *clergy of England*. During the vacation at our Leipsic mart, I took up your author, and begun where I left off before. I had thought, indeed, to despatch his whole book within the bulk of one packet; but I have run out beyond my length, and must again stop in the middle: though I hope you'll have more conscience in the exercise of your authority than to require any remainder from

Your most obedient servant,

PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS.

Leipsic, Sept. 18, 1713.
Stilo novo.

[* Virg. *Æn.* xii. 50.—D.]

REMARKS.

XXXIV.

I LEFT my author in his 90th page, proving the duty and necessity of *free-thinking*, from the conduct of your English clergy, in ten instances. The VIIth was concluded with a passage out of Victor Tununensis; which I hope is so fully cleared and answered, that none of the fraternity will hereafter vaunt of it, as they used to do, in booksellers' shops.

His VIIIth instance of their ill conduct is their daily publishing of treatises in dialogue, where they introduce *atheists, deists, sceptics*, and *socinians*, speaking for their own opinions with the same strength, subtilty, and art, that those men shew either in their books or conversation.[b] Nay one of them, which makes the IXth instance, has translated Lucretius (the only complete ancient system of atheism now extant) for the benefit of the English reader.[c]

When I consider myself as a Lutheran, born and dwelling on the great continent, I cannot but treat with scorn the weak efforts of this writer, who, while he attacks Christianity in common, brings arguments that reach no farther than

[b] Pag. 91.—["Lesley's Dialogue between a Deist and a Christian, 8vo; and his Dialogues between a Socinian and a Christian, 4to; Nichols's Conference with a Theist; and many others."—D.]

[c] Pag. 91.—["There is but one complete ancient *system of atheism* (viz. Epicurus' system written by Lucretius) left us upon record, and the priests will not suffer that to lie hid in a learned language; but one of them, the late Reverend Mr. Creech, has translated it into English verse, for the benefit and entertainment of the English reader. And there are more recommendations of divines prefixed before his performance than ever I saw before any *religious* or *devout author* whatsoever; and those all eminent and high divines," &c.—But Creech had not taken orders when his translation of Lucretius first appeared, in 1682. In consequence of this work, the free-thinkers seem to have considered him as one of their own sect; for in a poem attributed to Prior, entitled *A Satire on the Modern Translators* (*Suppl. to the Minor Poets*, part ii. p. 15. ed. 1750), we find the following lines concerning "painful Creech:"

"The wits confirm'd his labours with renown,
And swear *the early atheist* for their own."—D.]

home, within the narrow compass of your own island. But what, I pray, is the pretended crime? or where does the wrong conduct lie? I had thought that to propose objections with their full force had been a certain sign both of fairness in the writer, and assurance of a good cause. If they make atheists talk with great *strength and subtilty*, do they not refute them with greater strength, and overcome subtilty with truth? This our author denies not here: and if so, where is his *own conduct?* Before, he had charged the priests, *that they will not tell the truth*,[d] when it makes to their disadvantage; but here, it seems, *they tell too much*, and give the utmost strength to their adversaries' objections. Anon, he will tell us *of their smothering and stifling of passages in their translations*;[e] but here the crime is quite contrary, that they translate even *systems of atheism* too openly and entirely. What cavilling! what inconsistency! This is exactly

*Quid dem, quid non dem?**
Nolo, volo: volo, nolo rursum: cape, cedo.†

Since nothing coming from your English clergy can please this nice author, neither whole translations nor in part, I'll try if a *foreigner* can make him amends, when I rub in his nose, as I have done several already, some more of his *own translations*.

XXXV.

But, for a X^th^ instance, your priests are guilty of *pious frauds in translating and publishing books*,[f] even the Holy Bible itself. For, says he, ἐκκλησία is sometimes rendered *church*, other times *assembly*; and ἐπίσκοποι sometimes *bishops*, other times *overseers*: whereas the same word in the original ought to be *translated universally alike*.[g] Notable criticism, and vast penetration into the nature of lan-

[d] Pag. 82. [e] Pag. 94, 95. [* Hor. *Epist.* ii. 2. 63.—D.]
[† Ter. *Phorm.* v. 7. 57.—D.] [f] Pag. 92.
[g] Pag. 93.—[The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has "*always* translated alike." p. 75.—D.]

guages! for, to wave now what the translators of your Bible say on this very head in the close of their preface, can our writer be ignorant that in all tongues whatever a word of a moral or political signification, containing several complex ideas arbitrarily joined together, has seldom any correspondent word in any other language which extends to all those ideas? nay, that in the same language most moral words, by tract of time and instability of common use, either lose or gain some of their ideas, and have a narrower or larger meaning in one age than in another? Physical words indeed, as ἥλιος, σελήνη, θάλασσα, whose significations are uncompounded and immutable, may be always expressed alike, *sun*, *moon*, and *sea*; but the other sort ought not, and cannot, without great ambiguity and absurdity. See the variety of ἐκκλησία in Greek: it means the place, the building for an assembly; it means an assembly or congregation in that place: thus in the ancient heathen times; but in the Christian usage, besides these significations, it means the whole of a town or city, who are wont to assemble in one or more such places, whether they are actually assembled or not; it means the whole of a district, diocese, province, nation; it means diffusively the whole community of the Christian name; it means the governors of such places, or assemblies, or districts, of one or more, of larger or less. And has your English language one single word that is coextended through all these significations? The case is much alike in the other word, ἐπίσκοπος. Let our author then learn, before he sets up to teach. Had he read any good translation, ancient or modern, could he possibly be so pedantic with his *universally alike?* His own book indeed is *universally alike*, a perpetual detail either of his own shufflings or mistakes.

But let us view his particular texts. He's angry that in *Acts*, xix. 32, the word ἐκκλησία is rendered *assembly*, and not, as usually, the *church*. For, says he, in this place, where it manifestly signifies *the people*, had the translators said, *the church* (instead of *assembly*) *was confused, and the more*

part knew not wherefore they were come together; the signification of the word church would not have admitted of any doubt about its meaning.[h] Unfortunate blunderer! I cannot decide whether there's more nonsense in his expression, or more stupidity in his remark. Its *signification*, says he, would admit of no doubt about it's *meaning*; that is, its *signification* about its *signification*. Well; but ἐκκλησία there *means the people*; and, had it been rendered *church*, we should have known the *church* had meant the *laity*, as well as the *priests*. What priest ever denied that *church* in your English Bibles does generally comprehend all believers, people as well as clergy? But in this place that *assembly*, which he would call a *church*, was a mob of *pagans* got together in the town *theatre*; some for fear of their manufactures (as your silk-weavers once at London), and the most for they knew not what. And though ἐκκλησία, which signifies any assembly, is properly and decently used here in the original, can your English word *church*, that from its first rise has been consecrated to a religious sense, be extended to a heathen mutiny? This very instance shews, what I said before in general, that the political words in different languages are seldom totally equivalent. And those foreign words that are not interpreted, but adopted and retained, as *apostle, bishop, priest, deacon*, have always a narrower sense, where they are transplanted, than in their first soil. And yet our writer adds seriously (for there's no mark of raillery or jest), that, had the translators done their duty in this passage, there could have been no doubt about the meaning of the word *church*. No doubt in the least; for if that assembly could be called a *church*, you would have *churches* at your operas, *churches* at comedies, at puppet-shows, at masquerades. If he had taught your parliament this language, he might have saved the great charge of their

[h] Pag. 92.—[In the later eds. of the *Discourse* in English (see note, p. 290, l.) this passage is not altered. The French translation has—"le terme d'église *auroit été pris selon sa propre signification, qui n'auroit pas répondu au sujet.*" p. 136.—D.]

fifty new *churches;* for with one word he has built as many as there are coffee-houses in London; and, what is more, he has proved himself and his free-thinkers to be excellent *church*-men.

His other exception is *Acts*, xx.; where *οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τῆς ἐκκλησίας, the elders, the presbyters of the church*, ver. 17, are said to be *ἐπίσκοποι*, ver. 28, *overseers over all the flock.*[1] Here, instead of *overseers*, he would have it rendered *bishops*, that it might appear that *bishops* and *presbyters* in Scripture phrase are synonymous words. And what if they should be so, *iidem πρεσβύτεροι qui ἐπίσκοποι*, the first the name of their age and order, the latter of their office and duty? does he think to fright your bishops with this? does this affect the cause of episcopacy? how then came Theodorit a bishop, Theophylact an archbishop, and Chrysostom a patriarch, not to be aware of it, when they expressly *affirm* what our writer would have *appear?* They, with all Christian antiquity, never thought themselves and their order to succeed the Scripture *ἐπίσκοποι*, but the Scripture *ἀπόστολοι*; they were *διάδοχοι τῶν ἀποστόλων, the successors of the apostles.* The sum of the matter is this: though new institutions are formed, new words are not coined for them, but old ones borrowed and applied. *Ἐπίσκοπος*, whose general idea is *overseer*, was a word in use long before Christianity; a word of universal relation to economical, civil, military, naval, judicial, and religious matters. This word was assumed to denote the governing and presiding persons of the church, as *διάκονος* (another word of vulgar and diffused use) to denote the ministerial. The *presbyters* therefore, while the apostles lived, were *ἐπίσκοποι, overseers.* But the apostles, in foresight of their approaching martyrdom, having selected and appointed their successors in the several cities and communities, as St. Paul did Timothy at Ephesus, and Titus at Crete, A.D. LXIV., four years before his death, what name were these successors to be called by? not *ἀπόστολοι, apostles:* their modesty,

[1] Pag. 93.

as it seems, made them refuse it; they would keep that name proper and sacred to the first *extraordinary* messengers of Christ, though they really succeeded them in their office, in due part and measure, as the *ordinary* governors of the churches. It was agreed, therefore, over all Christendom at once, in the very next generation after the apostles, to assign and appropriate to them the word ἐπίσκοπος, or *bishop*. From that time to this, that appellation, which before included a *presbyter*, has been restrained to a superior order. And here's nothing in all this but what has happened in all languages and communities in the world. See the *Notitia* of the Roman and Greek empires, and you'll scarce find one name of any state employment, that in course of time did not vary from its primitive signification. So that should our Lutheran presbyters contend they are Scripture *bishops*, what would they get by it? No more than lies in the syllables. The time has been, when a commander even of a single regiment was called *imperator*: and must every such now-a-days set up to be *emperors?* the one pretence is altogether as just as the other.

But to speak a word to his version. He would have it *bishops* in *Acts*, xx., as it is in other places, and not *overseers*. Our Luther, indeed, has translated it here and every where *bischoffen*; but, if my countrymen do not hear me, I must beg his excuse. *Bishop* and *bischoff* give no internal idea to an illiterate Englishman or German. As an exotic word, they have no notion of it but from seeing a modern *bishop*. To such, therefore, this version, *you presbyters, whom the Holy Ghost hath made bishops over all the flock*, gives a sense erroneous and false. Well, then, is it translated in your Bible *overseers*: and if our awkward *free-thinker* had changed the tables, and expostulated, not why here *overseers*, but why not every where else, perhaps he could not have been so easily answered.

XXXVI.

Another *pious fraud* is laid to your translators, *Acts*, vii.

59. *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*] For, says he, the word *God* has no manuscript nor printed copy in any language to vouch it. And was this *insertion* made fraudulently? or is it not an *impious fraud* in this writer, to bring so false a charge against a book that deserves his veneration? are not the words *upon God* printed in *italic* letter, to warn the reader, as usually, that they are not in the original? In the same chapter there are these several words *inserted* to make the sense clearer, *so much as, Abraham, begat, time, the Father, saying, him, so;* and all distinguished in *italic* with a nice and religious exactness. Why did not our writer make exceptions to those? He can easily allow them; but the name of *God* to be inserted is a *free-thinker's* aversion. Well, but had the translators concealed the insertion, and not proclaimed it by an *italic* letter, where had been the *pious fraud?* what interest, what priestcraft can it serve? is this a text bandied for the rights of the church? Can he deny, that the words *upon God* supplied in the version are manifestly understood in the original? the Greek word is *ἐπικαλούμενον, calling upon:* and our author is uncommonly honest, when he charges one word, *God,* and not two, *upon God,* to be the insertion. So that *they stoned Stephen, calling upon——and saying, Lord,* &c. Pray, what or whom did he *call upon?* certainly either *God* or *the Lord;* and let our author take his choice. Nay, the words being thus in the text according to the present copies, *ΕΠΙΚΑΛΟΥΜΕΝΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΛΕΓΟΝΤΑ*; should I affirm that a word is dropt out, either $\overline{ΘΝ}$, *God,* absorpt by the preceding syllable *ON,* or $\overline{ΚΝ}$, *the Lord,* by the following syllable *ΚΑΙ*; and that your translators were of the same opinion, considering that *ἐπικαλεῖσθαι τὸν θεὸν* and *τὸν κύριον* come so frequently in the Septuagint; I dare challenge all the tribe to answer it, though they take the Cismarine critic* to their aid and assistance.

] Pag. 93.

[* Le Clerc: see note, p. 294.—D.]

XXXVII.

Well, but the *postscripts* of the II[d] Epistle to Timothy, and of the Epistle to Titus, wherein the former is styled *first bishop* of the church of the Ephesians, and the latter *of the Cretans, were both proved in parliament to be bold and spurious additions made by your reverend editors.*[k] This is formidable indeed to tell us at Leipsic, where your English parliament must needs have greater authority than any general council. But how, pray, was it *proved* there? was it *enacted* by all the estates, and with the bishops' concurrence? or was it *voted* only in the lower house? or, which is yet lower, was it only *debated?* or *when* was this great transaction? He quotes for it *Diurnal Occurrences,** a book unknown in these parts; so that I can only guess either at the time or the manner of it. However I durst lay a small wager, that it was done in what you call your Rump Parliament, and that this† learned proof was made there by some lay elder in buff. Be that as it will, I dare tell our author, without any vote of our German *diet* in opposition to his parliament, that it was never *proved* there nor any where else; and that he speaks not one true word in all this paragraph. For he blunders when he calls them *postscripts;* that word ever implying, that they were subjoined by the writer of the letter preceding. But nobody yet either believed or affirmed, that these were underwritten by St. Paul himself. They are nothing but memorandums or endorsements, written by others long after the death of the apostle. But be they postscripts or subscripts, your translators neither *made* them nor recommended them for Scripture. And his parliamentary proof, that *those additions were made by the reverend editors,* does miserably fail him. Impudence and

[k] Pag. 94.—[The later 8vo ed. of the *Discourse*, p. 93, and the 12mo ed. p. 77, (see note pp. 290, 1) have—"bold and spurious additions made *by some ancient priests, and continued* by our reverend editors." And so nearly the French translation, p. 138.—D.]

[* "p. 123, 124."—D.] [† and that this; 1*st ed.* "and this."—D.]

noise against plain matter of fact! Let him look into Dr. Mill's edition, and he'll see that very few of the manuscripts want them: and they were printed in the best Greek editions before your *editors* were born.

XXXVIII.

It is certain, says he, *the priests may plead the authority of the Fathers for forgery, corruption, and mangling of authors, with more reason than for any of their articles of faith.*[1] He grows in impudence and profaneness: but how does he make this out? from a passage of St. Jerome,[m] the import of which he understands not, and the words he has wilfully perverted. One Vigilantius had accused St. Jerome as a favourer of Origen's heresies, because he had translated several of his writings into Latin. The Father replies to this effect: 'That the nature of his studies led him to read all

[1] Pag. 96.—[The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has—"the authority of the Fathers *and the ancient Christian priests* for forgery, corruption, mangling, *and destruction* of authors, with more," &c. p. 79. The French translation—"l'autorité *des anciens Chrétiens* pour excuser ce qu'ils ont ajouté," &c. p. 142.—D.]

[m] Epist. ad. Vigilantium, tom. iv. ed. novæ, p. 275.—[Of the passage which he has translated, Collins gives the original in a note, as follows:

"Si igitur, quæ bona sunt transtuli, et mala vel amputavi vel correxi vel tacui, arguendus sum, cum per me Latini bona Origenis habeant et mala ignorent? Si hoc est crimen, arguatur et Hilarius. Sit in culpâ Vercellensis, qui omnium Psalmorum commentarios hæretici hominis (Eusebii Cæsariensis) vertit in nostrum eloquium, hæretica prætermittens. Taceo de Victorino Pictavionensi et cæteris ——— ne non tam me defendere, quam sociorum criminis videor quærere. *Adv. Vigilantium.* Op. Tom. 2. p. 312, 313. *Ed. Erasmi.*" *Discourse*, p. 97.

"Voici," says Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 281, "les paroles de St. Jerôme, Epist. adv. Vigil. tom. iv. edit. novæ, p. 275. et de la mienne, qui est Colon. Agrip. tom. ii. p. 251. *Significo . . . . me ita Origenem legisse, vel legere, ut Apollinarium, vel cæteros tractatores, quorum in quibusdam libros non recipit ecclesia, non quod omnia dicam esse damnanda, quæ in illorum voluminibus continentur, sed quod quædam reprehendenda confitear. Verum quia operis mei est et studii, multos legere . . . . non tam probaturus omnia, quam quæ bona sunt electurus, assumo multos in manus meas . . . . Origenes hæreticus . . . . At idem et Scripturas in multis bene interpretatus est . . . Si igitur quæ bona sunt transtuli, et mala vel amputavi, vel correxi, vel tacui, arguendus sum cur per me Latini bona ejus habeant, et mala ignorent?*"—D.]

sorts of books, such as those of Origen, Apollinarius, Eusebius; who in some points indeed were heretical, but in others had given great light to the Scriptures, and done eminent service to the church. That some of their books he had translated into Latin, for the use of those that understood not the Greek; but not so as to propagate their heresies: for he had either omitted those tracts, or rescinded or refuted those passages, which might pervert or scandalise the unlearned reader.'[n] Here, we see, St. Jerome does not excuse himself (as our writer turns it) for *mangling of authors*, but for translating them at all. But how in justice can the omission of some tracts or passages, where the translator is free to take what he pleases, be called *mangling of authors?* Did not Jerome acquaint the public, both in his prefaces to the respective books and in these epistles, that he had left out such passages? Did he *mangle* Origen in the original, and procure the Greek copies to be rased or interpolated? How was Origen then *mangled*, whose works were preserved entire both then and long after? Neither had Jerome's translation that consequence then, as in our days a numerous edition propagated from the press. His version was but one written copy, that might be transcribed by some of his friends, or a few others that were curious. And what is there in all this unworthy of an honest man? Were I to translate Petronius's *Civil War*, or some of the chaste epigrams of Martial, should I be counted a *mangler* because I added not all their obscenities? Your *free-thinkers*, at that rate, are the greatest *manglers of authors*, who have taken a contrary course, and culled all the lewd and smutty passages of the ancient poets, and printed them together.

But our writer cannot pass this passage of St. Jerome without a cast of his skill and fidelity. The words cited by him are, *Si igitur quæ bona sunt transtuli, et mala vel amputavi, vel correxi, vel tacui; arguendus sum, cur per me* LATINI *bona Origenis habeant, et mala ignorent?* which our faithful

[n] See also Epist. de Erroribus Origenis, p. 345. Adversus Rufinum Apologia 1 et 2.

writer thus translates, *Am I to be blamed for making* MEN *acquainted with what is good in Origen, and keeping them ignorant of what is bad in him?* Where the Father says *Latini*, the *Latins*, our author says *men* in general: on purpose to insinuate that Jerome had suppressed, or mutilated, or corrupted Origen's Greek copies. For while those were in being and entire, Jerome could not keep all *men* ignorant of what was bad in Origen, but only the Latins.

Where the Father says, *Qui omnium Psalmorum commentarios hæretici hominis vertit in nostrum eloquium*, our writer Englishes it thus: *Who translated into Latin the commentaries of* EUSEBIUS *of Cæsarea, a grand heretic.* The Father indeed means Eusebius, but names him not; but our writer has put him into the text, and in capitals too, to make the reader mind it; and then bestows out of his own store the epithet *grand*, and puts it in the mouth of St. Jerome. Why this venom thrown upon Eusebius, but that the *free-thinkers* hate him, as one of the chief writers of the church? Could our author be ignorant, that it was a great dispute then, and continues so still, whether Eusebius was really a *heretic*, that is, an *Arian*, or no? Has not your learned Dr. Cave, in a late elaborate dissertation,* done justice to his character? Why, then, *a grand heretic* in the version, when it's bare *heretic* in the text? An honest writer indeed, who, in the very place where he cries out on *forgery, corruption*, and *mangling*, cannot himself refrain from *forging, corrupting*, and *fraudulently adding*.

XXXIX.

I pass over his trifling instances of mangling Father Paul's *Letters*, Baumgarten's *Travels*, and Anthony Wood's *History*:° which omissions he has here kindly supplied, out of

[* See, appended to Cave's *Script. Eccles. Hist. Lit.* (t. ii. ed. 1743), *De Eusebii Cæs. Arianismo adversus Joannem Clericum*, and *Epistola Apologetica*, &c. —D.]

° Pag. 94, 95, 96.—[Brown, the translator of Paul's *Letters*, 1693, who "smothered the most remarkable and valuable passages" in them, (but see XLI.

dear love to *treason, superstition,* and *scandal.* And yet you perhaps in England can even in these trifles shew his fraud and prevarication.

He then commences his *third section* with pretended objections and answers about *free-thinking,* taken in a good and legitimate sense. Is he always at his juggling, and shifting the true question? Does he hope to slur his unwary reader with such a palpable imposture? *Free-thinking* here, for many pages together,[p] is put for common use of reason and judgment, a lawful liberty of examining, and, in a word, good *Protestantism.* Then whip about, and it stands for scepticism, for infidelity, for bare *atheism.* But his mask is too thin and too pellucid to cover his true face. He is still known for a mere atheist, though he talks of *free-thinking* in words that may become a Christian. What Aristippus once said, when he was pleased with some sweet unguent, *Curse on those effeminate wretches that have made so pretty a thing scandalous!** may be applied to him and his tribe, for bringing a scandal on so good a word as *free-thinking,* that does not belong to them. They *free* by way of distinction? that have the most slavish of systems, mere matter, eternal sequel of causes; chained fatalists, fettered Spinosists. They *thinkers* by way of eminence? who have proper title to no thought but that of the *fool,* when he *said in his heart there was no God.* For this is the first and last† of all their glorious searches.

But I could have saved him one objection, that *free-*

of the *Remarks,* p. 390). "The Reverend Translator of Baumgarten's *Travels,* in Churchhill's Collection of Voyages," who "stifled a passage that contains two very remarkable particulars" — about the dead coming out of their graves during divine service in a mosque at Cairo; and about a lake there, which turns blood-red once a year, perhaps in memory of the Egyptian plague. Bishop Fell, who corrupted Wood's *History* in many places while it was in the press, and struck out passages where Wood had done justice to Hobbes.—D.]

[p] Pag. 99-110.

[* "Diog. Laërt. ii. 76. (p. 124. ed. Meib.)." Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 289.—D.]

[† and last; 1*st ed.* "and the last."—D.]

thinking may produce a great number of atheists.[q] Pray, be not in pain for that; unless he means (as he often does) *free-thinking* and *atheism* for synonymous words. *It is possible,* says his objector,[r] *that if free-thinking be allowed, some men may think themselves into atheism.* Courage! and dismiss those dismal apprehensions. For, however it might be of old times, or now among some Hottentots or Iroquois, where the materials of thinking are scanty, and the methods uncultivated, there's no danger of this in England, in that light of science and learning. A person there may easily rob, plunder, perjure, debauch, or drink himself into atheism; but it's impossible he can *think* himself into it. Let him think thoroughly; come duly prepared, and proceed patiently and impartially; and I dare be answerable for him, without an office of insurance.

XL.

While I was looking on his passage of Zosimus[s] (whom, out of his profound skill in Greek, he twice writes Zozimus), I had like to have dropt a memorable paragraph, which shews his great affection to your clergy. He complains of the *great charge of maintaining such numbers of ecclesiastics, as a great evil to society, and a burden never felt on any other occasion.*[t] Now, how shall I accost him? as a grand historian, or a shrewd politician? for I know he's above the low considerations of divine worship, truth, piety, salvation, and immortality. But what news does he tell us? That the supporting of priests is a burden unknown before Christianity? Had he read over even those authors alone, with whose twice-borrowed scraps he has filled his margin, he would have learnt that both in Greece and Italy, before our Saviour's birth, the heathen priests were more in number, higher in

[q] Pag. 105.

[r] Pag. 104.—[Lest the reader should suppose that some particular person is meant by the words "his objector," I may notice that the passage quoted above stands thus in the *Discourse:* "It is objected, *that if free-thinking be allowed, it is possible,*" &c.—D.]

[s] Pag. 117, 118.—[See *Remarks,* sect. XLII.] [t] Pag. 114.

dignity, and better provided with endowments, salaries, and immunities, than now you are in England. The like was before in Egypt, and in every other country where humanity and letters had any footing. Many of his authors (whom he cites as *free-thinkers*) were priests themselves; Josephus, Plutarch, Cato, Cicero,[u] &c.; and the last named was made so after his consulate, the highest post of honour and power then in the universe: nay (to make our author quite lay him aside for ever), he had the *indelible character* too; for, being once made a priest, a priest he was to be for life. But what an adversary am I writing against, wholly ignorant of common history? And his politics are as low too, that would extirpate the whole order of your clergy, and so bring your country to the ignorance of the *savages*, to a worse condition than your old ancestors were in, while they had their *Bards* and their *Druids*. For it ever was and ever will be true, in all nations, under all manners and customs, *no priesthood, no letters, no humanity;* and reciprocally again, *society, laws, government, learning, a priesthood*. What, then, would our thoughtless *thinker* be at? Sink the order of the present clergy to save charges to the public, and pay the same or double to maintain as many for Epicurus, or Jupiter, or Baal;[v] for some order of priests there will be. Though, even take him in his *free-thinking* capacity, he can never conceive nor wish a priesthood either quieter for him, or cheaper, than that of the* present Church of England. Of your quietness himself is a convincing proof, who has writ this outrageous book, and has met with no punishment nor prosecution. And for the cheapness, that appeared lately in one of your parliaments, when the accounts exhibited shewed that 6000 of your clergy, the greater part of your whole number, had at a middle rate, one with another, not fifty pounds a-year. A poor emolument for so long, so laborious, so expensive an education, as must qualify them for holy

[u] Γίνεται . . τῶν ἱερέων, οὓς ἀβγουρας Ῥωμαῖοι καλοῦσι. Plut. in Cic. [*Opp.* t. iv. p. 816. ed. Reisk.—D.]

[v] See Remark the 5th.

[* than that of the; 1*st ed.* "than the."—D.]

orders. While I resided at Oxford, and saw such a conflux of youth to their annual admissions, I have often studied and admired why their parents would, under such mean encouragements, design their sons for the church; and those the most towardly and capable and select geniuses among their children, who must needs have emerged in a secular life. I congratulated, indeed, the felicity of your establishment, which attracted the choice youth of your nation for such very low pay; but my wonder was at the parents, who generally have interest, maintenance, and wealth, the first thing in their view: till at last one of your state lotteries ceased my astonishment. For as in that a few glittering prizes, 1000, 5000, 10,000 pounds, among an infinity of blanks, drew troops of adventurers, who, if the whole fund had been equally ticketed, would never have come in; so a few shining dignities in your church, prebends, deaneries, bishopricks, are the *pious fraud* that induces and decoys the parents to risk their child's fortune in it. Every one hopes his own will get some great prize in the church, and never reflects on the thousands of blanks in poor country livings. And if a foreigner may tell you his mind, from what he sees at home, 'tis this part of your establishment that makes your clergy excel ours. Do but once level all your preferments, and you'll soon be as level in your learning. For, instead of the flower of the English youth, you'll have only the refuse sent to your academies, and those, too, cramped and crippled in their studies, for want of aim and emulation. So that, if your *free-thinkers* had any politics, instead of suppressing your whole order, they should make you all alike; or, if that cannot be done, make your preferments a very lottery in the whole similitude. Let your church dignities be pure chance prizes, without regard to abilities, or morals, or letters: as a journeyman (I think) in that state lottery was the favourite child of fortune.

XLI.

But again, before I come to the inviting passage of Zosimus, I shall gather some of his scattered flowers, and comprise

them under one remark. *If any good Christian,* says he, *happens to reason better than ordinary, the priests presently charge him with atheism.*[w] He means only your English priests, as I see by his instances: and naughty men they, if any of them do so. But I'll give him a word of comfort, and offer myself as sponsor for them, that none of them will call him atheist, *for reasoning better than ordinary.* Good man, to avoid that odious name, he has sprinkled all his pages with mere nonsense, out of pure consideration and forecast.

To shew his good taste and his virtuous turn of mind,* he praises two abuses upon James I.; *that he was a doctor more than a king, and was priest-ridden by his archbishop;*[x] as the most VALUABLE passages in Father Paul's *Letters;* and yet, as I have been told, those passages are spurious and forged. Well, but were they genuine and true, are those the things he most *values?* O, the vast love and honour he bears to the crown and the mitre! But his palate is truly constant and uniform to itself: he drudges in all his other authors, ancient and modern, not to find their beauties, but their spots; not to gather the roses, but the thorns; not to suck good nutriment, but poison. A thousand bright pages in Plutarch and Tully pass heavy with him, and without† relish; but if he chances to meet with a suspicious or sore place, then he's feasted and regaled, like a fly upon an ulcer, or a beetle in dung: and with those delicious scraps put together, he has dressed out this book of *Free-thinking.*

But have a care of provoking him too much, for he has still in reserve more *instances of your conduct; your declamations against reason;*[y] such false reason, I suppose, as he and his tribe would put off for good *sterling; your arts and method of discouraging examination into the truths of religion;* such *truths,* forsooth, *of religion* as this, that religion itself is all

[w] Pag. 85.

[* his virtuous turn of mind; 1*st ed.* "the virtuous turn of his mind."—D.]

[x] Pag. 94, 95. [† him, and without; 1*st ed.* "him without."—D.]

[y] Pag. 97.

false: and again, *your encouraging examination when either authority is against you* (the authority, he means, of your late king James, when one* of his free-thinking doctors *thought* himself into popery), or *when you think that truth is certainly on your side;* he will not say that *truth is* certainly on your side, but only that *you think so:* however, he allows here you are *sometimes* sincere; a favour he would not grant you in some of his former instances.

But the last and most cutting instance is, *your instilling principles into youth*:[z] no doubt he means those pernicious *principles* of fearing God; honouring the king; loving your neighbour as yourselves; living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. O, the glorious nation you would be, if your stiff parsons were once displaced, and *free-thinkers* appointed tutors to your young nobility and gentry! How would arts, learning, manners, and all humanity flourish in an academy under such preceptors! who, instead of your Bible, should read Hobbes's *Leviathan;* should *instil* early the sound doctrines of the mortality of the soul, and the sole good of a voluptuous life. No doubt such an establishment would make you a happy people, and even a rich; for our youth would all desert us in Germany, and presently pass the sea for such noble education.

The beginning of his III[d] section, where (as I remarked before) *free-thinking* stands for no more than *thinking*, may pass in general for truth, though wholly an impertinence. For who in England forbids thinking? or who ever made such objections as he first raises, and then refutes? He dare not, sure, insinuate as if none of your clergy *thought*, nor examined any points of doctrine, but took a system of opinions by force and constraint, under the terror of an inquisition, or the dread of fire and faggot. So that we have xx. pages of mere amusement, under the ambiguity of a word. Let your clergy once profess that they are the true

[* See note, p. 361.—D.]

[z] Pag. 97.—[The French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has "*leurs* principes." p. 145.—D.]

free-thinkers, and you'll soon see the unbelieving tribe renounce their new name.

However, in these sapless pages he has scattered a mark of his great learning. He says, *the infinite variety of opinions, religions, and worships among the ancient heathens, never produced any disorder or confusion.*[a] What! was it no disorder when Socrates suffered death for his opinions; when Aristotle was impeached, and fled; when Stilpo was banished; and when Diogoras was proscribed? Were not the Epicureans driven out from several cities, for the debaucheries and tumults they caused there? Did not Antiochus banish all *philosophers* out of his whole kingdom;[b] and for any one to learn of them, made it death to the youth himself, and loss of goods to his parents? Did not Domitian expel all the philosophers out of Rome and whole Italy? Did the Galli, the vagabond priests of Cybele, make no disturbances in town and country? Did not the Romans frequently forbid *strange religions* and external rites that had crept into the city, and banish the authors of them? Did the Bacchanals create no disorders in Rome, when they endangered the whole state, and thousands were put to death for having been initiated in them? In a word, was that no disturbance in Egypt, which Juvenal tells of his own knowledge (and which frequently used to happen), when in two neighbouring cities their religious feuds ran so high, that, at the annual festival of one, the other, out of zeal, went to disturb the solemnity; and after thousands were fighting on both sides, and many eyes and noses lost, the scene ended in slaughter,

[a] Pag. 101.—[The later 8vo ed. of the *Discourse*, ibid. (see note, p. 290, 1) has "any *great* disorder." The 12mo ed. gives the passage thus: "And yet no confusion ever arose in Greece on account of this diversity of opinions. *Nay, so far were the differences among philosophers from being supposed to have any tendency towards confusion in society, that the Epicureans (Gassendi de Vita et Moribus Epicuri, cap. 5. l. 2.), as well as other philosophers, had salaries settled on them by the government.* Nor did the *great* variety of religions and worships, *which in old Rome were of six hundred different kinds, (Lipsius de Magnitud. Rom. l. 4. c. 5.)* ever produce any *great* disorder or confusion among the ancients," p. 84.; and so the French translation, p. 150.—D.]

[b] Athenæus, lib. xii. p. 547. [=t. iv. p. 532. ed. Schw.—D.]

and the body slain was cut* into bits, and eaten up raw by the enemies? And all this barbarity committed, because the one side worshipped *crocodiles*, and the other killed and eat them.

——— *summus utrinque*
Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus; cum solos credat habendos
Esse deos, quos ipse colit.†

Let him go now and talk facetiously at his club, that among the pagans there was no *polemic divinity*.

XLII.

We are now come to a grand secret of your priestcraft, *the toleration of vice, by which all the rogues and fools are engaged in your party.*[c] This, he says, was put in practice with success as early as Constantine the Great, who (*as Zozimus tells us*) *after he had committed such horrible villanies, which the* pagan *priests told him were not expiable in their religion, being assured by an Egyptian* bishop *that there was no villany so great but was to be expiated by the sacraments of the Christian religion, he quitted the religion of his ancestors, and embraced the* NEW IMPIETY; *so Zozimus impiously calls the Christian religion.*‡ Now, the business itself, laid to Constantine's charge here by a bigoted pagan, is too stale and trivial to deserve a new answer, having been fully refuted both by the ecclesiastic historians of old and several of the moderns. But what I here animadvert on is

[* slain was cut; 1*st ed.* "slain cut."—D.]

[† Juv. xv. 35.—D.]

[c] Pag. 117, 118.

[‡ In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) the words "*so Zozimus impiously calls the Christian religion*" are wanting, p. 97; and so in the French translation, p. 174.

The "mauvaise-foi" of Collins, in his version of this passage of Zosimus—his using terms unwarranted by the Greek text,—"an Egyptian *bishop*," and "*the sacraments of the Christian religion*," has drawn forth a very long note from Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 319, &c.; but it relates to particulars on which Bentley has not touched.—D.]

the prodigious awkwardness of our writer both in his version and application of this passage.

Zosimus, a poor superstitious creature (and consequently, as one would guess, an improper witness for our *free-thinker*), who has filled his little history not more with malice against the Christians than with bigotry for the pagans; who treats his reader with oracles of the Palmyrenes and Sibyls; with annual miracles done by Venus, where gold and silver swum upon water; with presages and dreams of old women; with thunders and earthquakes, as if they were prodigies; with a dead body vanishing in the middle of an army; with omens, and with predictions from the entrails* of beasts; with an apparition of Pallas and her Gorgon, and with the spectre of Achilles; with wooden idols that fire could not burn; with a necklace of the goddess Rhea, that executed divine vengeance; who imputes the taking of Rome by Alaric to the omission of pagan sacrifices, and the decay of the Roman empire to Constantine's neglecting the *ludi sæculares*: this wise and judicious author is brought in for a good evidence; and our avowed enemy to superstition connives at all this trumpery, for the sake of one stab at the reputation of Constantine and the honour of Christianity.

But how has he managed and represented it? The story, as Zosimus himself tells it,[d] is thus: 'Constantine, being troubled in conscience for some crimes he had committed, applied to the heathen priests for expiation. They answering, that they had no way of expiation for crimes of so deep a die, a certain Egyptian told him, that if he would turn Christian, all his sins would be immediately forgiven him. Constantine liking this well, and, after a renunciation of paganism, partaking of the Christian rites, *τῆς ἀσεβείας τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐποιήσατο, τὴν μαντικὴν ἔχειν ἐν ὑποψίᾳ*, *for his* FIRST INSTANCE OF IRRELIGION, *he began to suspect and cry down the art of foretelling things from the entrails of beasts*; for having had many events truly predicted to him by that

[* from the entrails; 1*st ed.* "from entrails."—D.]

[d] Pag. 104. [Lib. ii. cap. 29. p. 150. ed. Reit.—D.]

art, he was afraid others would make use of it against himself.' This is a faithful version; for that μαντικὴ here means *haruspicina, the art of divination by entrails,* appears from p. 157,* and other places of that author.

How amazing, now, is the ignorance of our *free-thinker!* unless, perhaps, he will plead impudence; for with such men *excusatius est voluntate peccare quam casu, it's counted a smaller fault to prevaricate on purpose than err by mistake.* He stops his citation and version in the very middle of the sentence, and interprets τῆς ἀσεβείας τὴν ἀρχὴν THE NEW IMPIETY; and then subjoins, with a sneer, *so Zozimus impiously calls the Christian religion.* If Zosimus speak† not *impiously,* somebody else does. For with him ἀσέβεια, *irreligion, neglect of worship,* has only reference to the pagan rites, and particularly to sacrifices and *haruspices.* These Constantine had abandoned; and for that reason deserved, as well as Cato the Censor,[e] to be put into our writer's *list of free-thinkers.* But see the partiality! Constantine has lost his favour, because he first made the government Christian: and an author must be mangled, sense and grammar distorted, all rules of syntax perverted, to bring out a little blasphemy. Ἀρχὴν τῆς ἀσεβείας ἐποιήσατο, *embraced the new impiety?* and the *Christian religion* meant by it? Intolerable construction, and monstrous! there's scarce *a such-like prodigy*‡ in his former version of Cicero.

XLIII.

The next witness that he summons from the shades is Julian the Apostate; and I wonder he did not call along with him Judas Iscariot. But what does Julian depose? Why, *the foresaid conversion of Constantine gave occasion to him to satirise thus our holy religion:*[f] *Whosoever is a ravisher, a murderer, guilty of sacrilege, or any other abomination, let him come boldly; for, when I have washed him with*

[* i. e. ed. Oxon. 1679=p. 223. ed. Reit.—D.]
[† speak; 1st ed. "speaks."—D.]
[‡ See p. 324.—D.]

[e] Pag. 135.
[f] Pag. 118.

this water, I'll immediately make him clean and innocent: and if he commits the same crimes again, I'll make him, after he has thumped his breast and beat his head, as clean as before.[s] And what can our writer make of this satire, though I've mended his version for him? A ridiculous and stale banter, used by Celsus and others before Julian, upon the Christian doctrines, baptism, repentance, and remission of sins. Baptism is rallied as *mere washing*, and repentance as *thumping the breast** and other outward grimace. The inward grace, the intrinsic change of mind, are left out of the character. And whom are we to believe, these pagans or our own selves? Are we to fetch our notions of the sacraments from scraps of Julian and Celsus? or from the Scripture, the pure fountain; from what we read, know, and profess? And yet the banter came more decently out of Celsus an Epicurean's mouth, than out of Julian's, the most bigoted creature in the world. He to laugh at expiation by baptism, whose whole life after his apostacy was a continued course of *καθαρμοὶ*, washings, purgations, expiations, with the most absurd ceremonies? addicted to the whole train of superstitions; omens, presages, prodigies, spectres, dreams, visions, auguries, oracles, magic, theurgic, psychomantic? whose whole court in a manner consisted of *haruspices* and *sacrificuli*, and philosophers as silly as they? who was always poring in the entrails of cattle, to find futurities there? who, if he had returned victor out of Persia (as his very pagan friends jested on him), would have extinguished the whole species of bulls and cows by the number of his sacrifices?† I have drawn this character of him from his own writings, and the heathens his contemporaries; that I might not bring suspected testimonies from Christian authors. Though even these allow him to have been *egregiæ indolis*,‡ *an extraordi-*

[s] Juliani Cæsares, in fine. [* *breast*; 1st ed. "*head*."—D.]

[† Ar. de La Chapelle (*La Frip. Laïque*, p. 333) refers to Am. Marcel. l. xxv. p. 427. ed. 1681.=t. ii. p. 46. ed. Bip.—D.]

[‡ "C'est St. Augustin qui l'a dit, dans sa *Cité de Dieu*, liv. v. chap. xxi." Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 336.—D.]

nary genius, if he had not been spoilt by the philosophers his masters. The truth is, those persons, for their professorial interest, and to keep the pagan system in some countenance against the objections of Christians, had quite altered the old schemes of philosophy, and pretended to more impulses, inspirations, revelations, and commerce with the Deity than Christians could truly do. Not one of those sanctified philosophers but had dreams, visions, and ecstatic colloquies with demons every night: and with this trumpery they drew Julian off from Christianity, and made him think himself as great an adept as any of his teachers. He saw the *sun* in a vision speaking to him in verse, and foretelling the death of Constantius;[g] besides other innumerable communications with his favourite god Mithras. This was the sly way they took; *clavum clavo,* to surfeit him with revelations enough for a St. Brigit: nor could they ever have made him apostatise, but by infatuating him with superstitions. However, though Christianity suffered by losing one of his great abilities and moral virtues, our modern atheists can never reckon him on their side, among the list of *free-thinkers.*

XLIV.

Our writer raises an objection, which, unless he had better answered, he had better have let alone; *that free-thinkers themselves are the most infamous, wicked, and senseless of all mankind.*[h] He pretends not yet to refute this from fact and experience, by telling who he is, or who are members of his *growing sect,* that we might bring their characters to the touchstone; but he argues forsooth *a priori.*

The reproach of *senseless* he confutes with ease, by a *self-evident* proposition; *for men that use their understandings must have more sense than they that use them not.*[i] Very compendious truly! but out of too much precipitation he leaves his syllogism in the lurch. He forgets to prove, that

[g] Zosim. pag. 155. [=p. 220. ed. Reit.—D.]

[h] Pag. 118.

[i] Pag. 120.

every man that *uses his understanding* is (in the meaning of his book) a *free-thinker*. Without this, that same *senseless* will still stick close upon him, and the closer for this very syllogism. 'Tis mere chicanery in the word: a *free-thinker*, in this *self-evident* proposition, is *any man that uses his understanding*,[j] that is, that *thinks* at all: a very comprehensive definition. And yet presently in the next paragraph, a *free-thinker* is but *one of a thousand*; one that *departs from the sentiments of the herd of mankind*; that is (for he could scarce have told it us in a plainer description), a mere *atheist*, or at least *no Christian*. Are not these two acceptations of the same word wonderfully consistent? Either let him profess plainly, that no Christian, no man but an atheist, this one of a thousand, *uses his understanding*; or let him own that himself has used none here, and that he and his syllogism too have much of the *senseless*.

Infamy and *wickedness*, the second reproach, he thus repels from his party: a *free-thinker*, who incurs *the whole malice of the priests*, and *is sure to have* 999 *of a thousand for his enemies, is obliged for his own sake* IN THIS WORLD *to be virtuous and honest*.[k] So that here, as far as this argument goes, if the *free-thinkers* are not wicked, it's only out of fear and restraint. A good hint how *virtuous* they would be, if the *growing sect* should grow so numerous as to promise themselves impunity, and face it out against infamy and scandal. If their *honesty*, by their own confession, is owing to their paucity, it is high time indeed to inquire into their numbers.

But (2*dly*) to commence a *free-thinker requires great diligence and application of mind; and he expels all vicious dispositions and passions by being never out of action*;[l] and so we have another egregious demonstration. But is this too to pass upon us for *self-evident?* Are all *busy* men *virtuous?* And are all *free-thinkers busy?* I'll be responsible for neither of the propositions. But the poor writer seems

[j] Pag. 120. [k] Ibid. [l] Pag. 121.

to hint here tacitly for himself, what *great diligence*, what *application of mind*, he has used, to work himself into atheism: how much more to compose such an elaborate book! how many merry meetings and kind assignations has he balked, while he was gleaning his bundle of scraps! how many watchful nights and abstemious days has he passed in painful and dry drudgery; while you lazy *ecclesiastics*, he says, *were employed in the most innocent manner you can be, in mere eating and drinking!*[m] And yet methinks you have done something else besides making good cheer; or else Germany would not be so full of your praises, and our libraries full of your books; where such puny performances as his, for all his *diligence* and *application*, will never deserve admission.

Well, but (*3dly*) *by much* thinking (here again we are tricked for *free-thinking*) *men comprehend the whole compass of human life; are convinced, that* IN THIS LIFE *misery attends the practice of vice, and happiness that of virtue; and that to live* pleasantly, *they must live* virtuously.[n] A wonderful discovery indeed! and can nobody *comprehend this* but *free-thinkers* and *atheists?* Why, this is the most beaten topic in all the books and sermons of your *clergy;* that even in this life a virtuous man, a good Christian, is the most happy of men; that God has forbid nothing beneficial and useful to us; that besides the future promises and threats, virtue carries here its own reward, and vice its own punishment. So that if this notion is sufficient to make a free-thinker *virtuous*, much more will it operate upon *Christians*, when supported and enforced with a firm belief of another life.

The result, then, of his arguments for a free-thinker's *virtue* is this, that *he fears evil in this world*, that he's *a man*

[m] Pag. 114.

[n] Pag. 121.—[In this passage of the *Discourse* (which Bentley has not given verbatim) the 12mo ed. (see note, p. 291) omits the words, "*in this life; and that to live pleasantly, they must live virtuously.*" p. 100. And so the French translation, p. 179.—D.]

of business and application, and *loves pleasure in this life.* This is all the security he offers for his honesty and good behaviour. By which he declares himself and his clan to be mere *atheists*, as much as if he had spoke it out. For, as you see, immortality is quite out of their scheme; and the saying used here, *to live pleasantly, they must live virtuously*, is the very axiom of Epicurus, *οὐκ ἔστιν ἡδέως ζῆν, ἄνευ τοῦ φρονίμως καὶ καλῶς καὶ δικαίως*,[o] *'tis not possible to live pleasantly, without living wisely, honestly, and justly*; and so *vice versa.* This is said indeed; but said by him with so ill a grace, as to set folks a-laughing. And our author might have seen how all the other sects ridiculed this magniloquence of Epicurus, as inconsistent with his whole system; and proved by set and legitimate treatises,* that *a true Epicurean could not live a pleasant life, much less a virtuous.* And I dare say, were this writer's soul known, and if he speaks true of his *application of mind*, he finds no great *pleasure* in this† gloomy doctrine of utter extinction.

But to leave that to his own conscience; he is very odd and diverting, when, to prove this Epicurean notion, he draws in two passages of Cicero: FOR *who*, says he, *lives pleasantly, except him who delights in his duty?* &c.[p] This is quoted out of the fifth *Paradox*, where he argues in the *Stoical* manner, *that the wise man alone is free, and every fool a slave: quis enim* [*igitur*] *vivit*, ut vult, *for who lives* freely, as he list (this our writer translates *pleasantly*), *but he who delights in his duty*, &c., that is, in short, *but the wise man of the Stoics?* Now, what a fetch and strain is here to draw this character to the Epicurean! How decently it sits upon him! He might as justly apply to him all the beatitudes in our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount.

But he has a second passage, *Offices*, i. 2. *Whoever places*

[o] Κύριαι δόξαι, *num.* v. et epistola ad Menœcea.—[Diog. Laërt. x. 140. p. 662. ed. Meib.—D.]

[* "Entre autres, Plutarque a fait une Dissertation . . . ὅτι οὐδὲ ζῆν ἐστιν ἡδέως κατ' Ἐπίκουρον," &c. AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 346.—D.] [† this; 1*st ed.* "his."—D.] [p] Pag. 121.

happiness in any thing besides virtue, &c.[q] Another sagacious application! Is this the man that for four pages together insults the clergy for misapplying passages of Tully?[r] This in the *Offices* stands really thus: that great author having determined to write a book to his son (whom he had then placed under a Peripatetic master) *About the duties of civil life,* declares in the proem what philosophers he would follow. *Because there are some sects,* says he, *that by wrong stating the ends of good and evil pervert all civil duty,* friendship, justice, liberality, fortitude, temperance. *For he that separates the chief good from virtue and honesty, and measures it by his own profit (if he is constant to his principle, and is not sometimes overcome by good nature), can neither be friendly, just, nor liberal; neither can he be courageous, who declares pain the greatest evil; nor temperate, who maintains pleasure to be the greatest good. These sects,* subjoins he, *if they are consistent with themselves, can have nothing to say* de officio, *about civil duty. That subject solely belongs to Stoics, Academics, and Peripatetics.* Where it is manifest, the *sects* he reflects on are the Epicureans and Cyrenaïcs: and we have his plain declaration, that upon those principles no man can *live honestly and virtuously.* And yet this inauspicious gleaner, this new reviser forsooth of Cicero, will needs wrest this very passage to a commendation of Epicurus's and his own rules of morality. And pray observe how gingerly he translates *temperans,* moderate in the enjoyment of pleasure.* Whereas *temperance,* according to Tully, *in prætermittendis et aspernandis voluptatibus cernitur,† consists in the neglecting and despising of pleasure.* If our writer should be found a popish priest at last, I dare say he's a very easy and *moderate* confessor.

[q] Pag. 122. [r] Pag. 137, &c.

[* —— "aut temperans, voluptatem summum bonum statuens."—D.]

[† *De Fin.* v. 23.—D.]

XLV.

But he now leaves arguments *a priori*, and proceeds to historical accounts; wherein he will shew, *that they who have been distinguished in all ages for their understanding and virtue have been free-thinkers.*[s] Such *free-thinkers* as his party are, or else all his labour is lost: and yet we shall find, that among his whole list there's scarce a pair that will come under that character.

SOCRATES, his first instance, *the divinest man of the heathen world, was*, as he says, *a very great free-thinker.* By what mark or token? Why, *he disbelieved the gods of his country, and the common creeds about them.*[t] Allow that; though just before his death he made a hymn to Apollo, and left a sacrifice to Æsculapius; yet why is this character so peculiar to Socrates? I'll help our author to a million of *free-thinkers*, upon the very same reason. For Constantine himself, whom he abused before, and all the pagan converts to Christianity before him and after, *disbelieved the* (same) *gods of their country, and the common creeds about them.* Nay, they far excelled Socrates in their free-thinking quality; for he timorously *fell in with the reigning superstition of his country, and suffered it quietly to take its course:*[u] but they heroically professed their true sentiments; in spite of terrors and tortures, contemned, routed, and trampled down *the gods of their country;* till pagan superstition was quite extinct, and washed away with the blood of so many martyrs. And why, pray, could not these deserve from our writer the honourable name of *free-thinkers?* The reason is manifest: the Christians were *free-thinkers* at first, while they *contradicted the herd of mankind;* but now Christianity is established, they themselves are become the herd, and conse-

[s] Pag. 123.—[In the French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) we find "distingués ... par la solidité de leur jugement," p. 181, without any corresponding words to "and virtue:" there, too, in the passage next cited by Bentley, "the divinest man" is rendered "l'homme *le plus sage*." ibid.—D.]

[t] Ibid.

[u] Pag. 123.

quently free-thinking now consists in contradicting them. Dare he deny this is his notion? And that his characteristic of free-thinking is to oppose a great majority? No matter whether right or wrong; whether the herd is in truth or in error, free-thinking must be singularity. *Unthinking, shallow fellow!*[v] for at this rate, if the *growing sect* should so spread, as to attain the name of the herd, the only title then to free-thinking would be to oppose the *free-thinkers.*

Well, but Socrates *declared his dislike, when he heard men attribute* repentance, anger, *and other passions to the gods, and talk of* wars and battles in heaven, *and of the* gods getting women with child, *and such-like fabulous and blasphemous stories.*[w] This is quoted by him out of *Plato in Euthyphrone,** as if they were that author's own words. And what a fine scene am I entering upon! He to complain of *mangling, forging,* and *corrupting* passages! And himself here to forge so openly, on purpose to hook in some bold and saucy blasphemy! *Repentance and anger attributed to the gods:* this glances aside at those frequent expressions of our Bible, *the wrath of the Lord,* and *the Lord repented.* As if the whole herd of Christians did not know that these are not to be taken literally, but are spoken *ἀνθρωποπαθῶς, in a human manner,* accommodated to our capacities and affections; the nature of God being infinitely above all ruffles of passion. And then *wars and battles in heaven:* this is pointed against *Revelations,* xii. 7. *And there was war in heaven; Michael*

[v] Pag. 104.—[" If there is any such rare monster as an atheist, David has given us his character in these words: *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God;* that is, no one denies the existence of a God but some idle, *unthinking, shallow fellow.*"—D.]

[w] Pag. 123.—[The French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has, " ou que les dieux *débauchoient* les femmes." p. 182.—" Ce qui," says Ar. de La Chapelle, " est plus fort, et même tout autre que ce que Mr. Collins dit dans son Anglois." *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 356.—D.]

[* The reference " Platonis Euthyphro. p. 6. vol. i. ed. Serrani," which is found in all the editions of the *Discourse* in English (see note, p. 290, 1), is omitted in the French translation.—D.]

and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. Now where has this writer lived, or what *idiot evangelist** was he bred under, not to know that this is all vision and allegory, and not proposed as literal truth? But his mother perhaps, that gave him his first notions about *Bel and the Dragon*,† might frighten too the naughty boy with *Michael and the Dragon.* His last expression, *of the gods getting women with child*, without doubt was designed by him as a flout upon our Saviour's incarnation.

But when we come to consult Plato himself in the passage alleged here, how do all this writer's insinuations vanish, and how does his own impudence and prevarication appear! The whole passage is no more than this: Socrates, discoursing with Euthyphron an *haruspex*, who was bringing an indictment for murder against his own father, asked him if he thought it just and pious to do so: 'Yes, says the other, it is right and pious to bring an offender to justice, though he be my father; for so Jove bound his father Saturn in chains, for devouring his children; and Saturn before had castrated his father for some other crime. I confess, replies Socrates, when I hear such things said of the gods, *I assent with some difficulty*:[x] but do you think these things true? and that there are really wars, and enmities, and battles among the gods; and many other such matters, as poets and painters represent? These are all true, says the other, and stranger things than these, which I could tell you.' This is all that is there said on this head: and then Socrates proceeds in his disputation, upon the very concession that these accounts of the gods are true.

And hence, first, we may observe, that Socrates was not so *free* a thinker as our writer represents him. For, according to Varro's division‡ of religions into *poetical, civil*, and *philosophical*, it is the first here that Socrates with some diffi-

[* See p. 363.—D.] [† See p. 314.—D.]

[x] Δυσχερῶς πως ἀποδέχομαι.—[Plat. *Opp.* t. ii. p. 121. ed. 1826.—D.]

[‡ In St. Augustin, *De Civ. Dei*: see *Remark* LI.—D.]

culty assents to, or very tenderly denies: whereas the Stoics, that came after him, treated openly that whole poetic system as *impious* and *superstitious;* and these very stories of Saturn and Jupiter, and of the wars with Titans and giants, and of gods against gods, as *wicked fables, anile superstitions, foolish and pernicious errors.*[y] But as to the *civil* religion, Socrates never opposed it, but always countenanced it both by discourse and example. His precept to his scholars about matters of worship, was to govern themselves *νόμῳ πόλεως,** *by the custom of the country.* He himself sacrificed regularly and openly both at home and at the public altars; he sent his friends to consult the oracle at Delphi upon all affairs of importance. How, therefore, will our writer make out, *that he disbelieved the gods of his country?* That, indeed, was the indictment against him; *ἀδικεῖ Σωκράτης, οὐς . . ἡ πόλις νομίζει θεοὺς οὐ νομίζων:*[z] but he did not plead guilty to it. And though our writer should now convict him, yet I am sure his celebrated *dæmonium,* by whose admonition and impulse he guided all his affairs, sufficiently secures him from being listed and consociated with our modern *free-thinkers.*

Another thing we may observe from this passage of Plato is, the unfairness and malignity of our writer; who, without the least hint from his author, has foisted in two scoffs and contumelies upon the Scripture. There's nothing said there of *God's repentance and anger;* not a word of *gods getting women with child:* why then does he suborn Plato to speak what he never said? Why so great a name to cover his own impiety? *Mala mens, malus animus:* and from this instance take the measure of our writer's veracity.

But he will still press Socrates into the service, and force him into his regiment of free-thinkers; *because he did not make notions, or speculations, or mysteries, any parts of his*

[y] Cicero de Nat. Deor. ii. 24, 28.

[* Xen. *Mem.* lib. i. cap. 3.—"Tout ce que Mr. Bentley dit ici de Socrate est tiré de Xenophon." AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 364.—D.]

[z] Xenophon. Memorab. lib. i.—[cap. 1.—D.]

religion.[a] No mysteries? a wager with our writer, that he was initiated in the mysteries of Ceres Eleusina; and consequently, had he lived in the present age, would never have flouted *Christianity* for being *mysterious.* But where is our author's proof for this character of Socrates? Why, *he demonstrated all men to be fools who troubled themselves with inquiries into* heavenly things;* *and asked such inquirers, whether they had attained a perfect knowledge of human things, since they searched into heavenly.* This the shrewd author gives as a translation from Xenophon;[b] and he proposes here *heavenly things* in the Christian sense used by our Saviour and his apostles. What shall I say, or what shall I not say? But I have spent already all my wonder and words too upon† this writer's stupidity. Can any thing be plainer, than that the τὰ οὐράνια, the *heavenly things,* in that passage of Xenophon mean *celestial* bodies and appearances, their causes, magnitudes, and motions? These physiological inquiries, which had employed the former philosophers, Socrates let alone, and first turned his speculations to morality and human life. This is it, that Xenophon says there express; and it is echoed over and over in all ancient authors.[c] Let us take now our writer's argument, and see how it concludes: *Because Socrates did not cultivate astronomy, but ethics, therefore he had no mysteries in his religion.* Because our writer has cultivated no science at all, *therefore* he makes such silly syllogisms and blunders abominable.

XLVI.

To bring PLATO in among his *free-thinkers,* our writer is put hard to his shifts, and forced to make several doubles. He was not so *free,* he owns, as Socrates; but, alarmed at

[a] Pag. 125.

[* The French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291), has "*mystères* célestes." p. 185.—D.]

[b] Memor. lib. i.—[cap. 1.—D.] [† upon; 1*st ed.* "for."—D.]

[c] See Cicer. Acad. i. 4; Tus. iii. 4, and v. 4; Diogenes Laërt. in Soc.; and many more.

his fate, kept himself more upon his guard, *and never talked publicly against the religion of his country*.[d] This is arguing backwards, and gives him one remove out of the list. But he brings him back with a fetch; *for he thought himself into notions so contrary to those known in Greece, and so resembling Christianity, that, as some Christians suspected he had read the Old Testament, so Celsus charges our Saviour with reading and borrowing from him.* Allow this, and admire the consistency of our writer's language and sentiments. The *free-thinking* of Plato, by his present account of it, consisted solely in approaching to Christianity; but our modern free-thinking lies wholly in receding from it, in a course retrograde to that of Plato. This free-thinking is a mere *empusa;* it changes shapes as fast as Vertumnus:

*Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo?**

But he goes on, and remarks, *that Origen indeed very well defends our blessed Lord from Celsus's charge.*[e] When you see the words *very well*, and the compliment of *blessed Lord*, you are to expect from our writer some smart piece of burlesque. And here you have it; *for Origen*, says he, *well replies, that Celsus deserves to be laughed at, when he affirms* JESUS *had read Plato: who was bred and born among the Jews; and was so far from having been taught Greek letters, that he was not taught Hebrew letters, as the Scriptures testify.* You see, Origen's answer here is commended as *very good;* to insinuate, with a sneer, that our Saviour was *illiterate.* Contemptible buffoon! Origen† did not mean he had

[d] Pag. 126. [* Hor. *Epist.* i. 1. 90.—D.]

[e] Pag. 127.—[In the French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) the passage is rendered, "Origène en le réfutant, dit," &c. p. 186.—D.]

[† "Voici les propres paroles d'Origène, que Collins a rapportées, Ad. Cels. lib. vi. pag. 286. edit. Cant. 1677. *ὁ παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις γεγεννημένος, καὶ ἀνατεθραμμένος, καὶ Ἰωσὴφ τοῦ τέκτονος νομισθεὶς εἶναι υἱὸς, καὶ μηδὲ γράμματα μεμαθηκὼς, οὐ μόνον τὰ Ἑλλήνων, ἀλλὰ οὐδὲ τὰ Ἑβραίων, ὅπερ καὶ αἱ φιλαλήθεις μαρτυροῦσι γραφαὶ τῶν περὶ αὐτόν.* Je ne traduirai point ici ce passage, parce que la traduction de l'auteur du *Discours*, &c. est assez fidèle; à cela près, que dans sa citation, de même que dans son interprétation, il a omis ces paroles essentielles, *et qui étoit estimé fils du charpentier Joseph.* Sur le tout, cet auteur, plus sincère,

no letters, but that he did not acquire them in the vulgar way, by institution and industry. He was *θεοδίδακτος*, *αὐτοδίδακτος*, *taught of God, taught of himself*. Which made the Jews exclaim, who knew his parentage and education, *πόθεν τούτῳ ἡ σοφία αὕτη*; *whence hath this man this wisdom?*[f] Need he to learn languages under a preceptor, who could give to his disciples the gift of all languages? Need he be taught wisdom by Plato or Gamaliel who was *essential wisdom itself, ἡ σοφία καὶ ὁ λόγος θεοῦ?*

But he has another gird upon Christianity; *for Amelius, a heathen Platonist, upon reading the first verses of St.* JOHN *the Evangelist, cried out, By Jove, this* barbarian *is of our master Plato's opinion*:[g] where he imposes again on the English reader with his *barbarian*, as he did before with his *idiot evangelist*.* For *ὁ βάρβαρος* in the original has no notion in it of contempt of the person; but relates solely to the country of Palestine, as out of the bounds of Greece. But, pray, where did our learned writer find this odd and scurrile turn of Amelius's words? The passage itself, Amelius's own writing, is extant in Eusebius, Theodorit, and Cyril;[h] which I shall translate, without either *forging* or *mangling*: *And this,* says Amelius, *was ὁ λόγος, the Word: by whom, being himself eternal, all things that are existed, as Heraclitus would maintain: and indeed whom the* barbarian *affirms, having the place and dignity of the beginning* (or *principle*) *to be with God, and to be God; by whom all things entirely were made; in whom whatever was made hath its life and being; who, descending into body, and putting on flesh,*

auroit bien dû avertir que le terme *μεμαθηκὼς* ne pouvoit s'entendre que d'une instruction prise dans les écoles humaines. Il est même certain que la bonne-foi ne lui permettoit pas de le dissimuler, puisqu'ayant pris sa citation dans l'édition de Cambrige, il ne peut qu'y avoir lu cette note de Spencer. '*Matt.* xiii. 25 [54]. *Marc.* vi. 2, 3. Clariss. Grotius in *Annot.* ad Marc. *Causa admirationis, ut collatio Lucæ et Johannis nos docet, hæc erat, quod Jesus, nullo humano magisterio institutus, summa cum perspicuitate prophetarum verba explicaret.*'" AR. DE LA CHAPELLE, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 375.—D.]

[f] Matt. xiii. 54. [g] Pag. 127. [* See p. 363.—D.]

[h] Euseb. Præp. p. 540; Theod. Græc. Affect. p. 33; Cyrill. c. Julian. p. 283.

took the form of man; though even then he gave proof of the majesty of his nature: nay, and after his dissolution was deified again; and is God, the same he was before he descended into body, and flesh, and man. Is there any air in all this of banter or contempt? Has it not, the very contrary, an air of* the most serious assent and approbation? Has he not paraphrased the Evangelist's words in the best style and manner? Ὑπεράγαται καὶ τεθαύμαχε, says Theodorit; *Amelius venerates and admires the proem of St. John's Gospel;* and perhaps it was he (though no worse, if it was another Platonist,) who said *it deserved to be writ in letters of gold, and set in the most conspicuous place in every church.*[i] And who now is the *barbarian* but our writer himself? The Platonist he brought to affront the Evangelist is found an adorer of him. I hope he'll learn, in his next performance, not to depend too much on second or fifth-hand citations.†

Our author seems sensible that he drags Plato *per force* into the club of *free-thinkers,* as Cacus did his oxen into his cave by the tails. For which hanging back and reluctancy Plato shall have a dash; and since he cannot make a good *free-thinker* of him, he'll make him a creed-maker: *for several of his notions became fundamental articles of the Christian faith.*[j] It really may be so; for the first article of my faith is, *I believe in God, and that he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*[k] And I persuade myself that Plato and his master, and many other good men before our Saviour's manifestation, had the very same article. And I had rather

[* Has it not, the very contrary, an air of; 1*st ed.* "Is it not the very contrary, of."—D.]

[i] Augustin de Civ. Dei, x. 29. Quod initium S. Evangelii, cui nomen est secundum Joannem, quidam Platonicus . . . . . aureis literis conscribendum, et per omnes ecclesias in locis eminentissimis proponendum esse dicebat.

[† Collins's reference at the bottom of the page is, "Per Jovem, barbarus iste cum nostro Platone sentit. Apud Reeve's *Apologies* in his *Dissert. upon Justin Martyr.*"—D.]

[j] Pag. 128.—[The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has, "*were afterwards esteemed* fundamental," &c. p. 105; and so the French translation, p. 187.—D.]

[k] Heb. xi. 6.

*have my soul be with those,** though they had not the light of the Gospel, than with such of our moderns *as trample pearls under their feet, and rend those that lay them before them.* But I do not owe this article to Plato, but to God, the common author of nature, and father of rational light. When our writer specifies more articles as borrowed from Plato, your own divines will take care of him, and do justice to revelation.

Yes, *but zealous Christians forged several things under Plato's name, with which they had great success in the conversion of the heathen world.*[l] He's at his old charge of forgery,† though it never succeeds in his hands. And what, pray you, did they forge? Why, *the thirteenth letter to Dionysius, printed in his works.* But is this our author's own criticism? is it supported by any reasons hammered on his own anvil? Not the least pretence to those; but he refers to Dr. Cudworth, and the business is done. O wretched gleaner of weeds! Has he read that noble work, *The Intellectual System,* to no better purpose? One oversight, one error, he culls out for his use; and passes over a thousand noble truths, that might have made him a better man, and no writer.

The doctor there says, *It is supposititious, and counterfeit by some zealous and ignorant Christian; as there is accordingly a νοθεύεται, or brand of bastardy, prefixed to it in all the editions of Plato's works.*[m] That's true indeed of the *brand;* but he was a bold ignorant that put it there. That letter is as genuine as any of the rest, and was received in the list before the Christian name began. Laërtius, an Epicurean,[n] who lived in Antoninus Pius's time, gives a catalogue of them all; ἐπιστολαὶ τρισκαίδεκα, says he, *epistles thirteen:* and so Suidas in *Εὐπράττειν*: but take this branded one away,

[* An allusion, observes Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 383, to a reported saying of Averroës, "moriatur anima mea morte philosophorum" — "malle se animam suam esse cum philosophis," &c. See Bayle in Aver. note H.—D.]

[† See p. 383.—D.]

[l] Pag. 128.

[m] Cudworth, p. 403. [ed. 1678.—D.]

[n] In Platone, iii. 61.

and there are but *twelve*. Among these are πρὸς *Διονύσιον τέτταρες, four*, says he, *to Dionysius:* remove this suspected one, and there remain but *three*. In a word, all the present thirteen answer exactly to his list, both in names and in number; except a small various lection, To *Aristodorus* the Xth letter, whom he calls *Aristodemus*. And this alone is sufficient to clear the Christians of the pretended forgery. For surely Laërtius could come at copies of Plato 200 years old, since we now have them of 700 or more: and if the present XIIIth was there, it must be writ before Christ was born. But to go farther still: this recension of Plato's works he gives not from himself, but from Thrasyllus, who, flourishing in the time of Augustus, must needs be older than Christ. Nay, he cites, without the least hint of diversity in the number, another recension by Aristophanes Grammaticus, who was a writer 200 years before the Christian era. And now, if we look into the internal character of the letter itself, it will have all the marks of genuineness. 'Tis not some staple commonplace, as most of those forged by the Sophists are, but a letter of business, circumstantiated with great variety of things and persons, all apt and proper to the writer and to the date. It was forged, therefore, by nobody, much less by any *Christian;* who certainly would never have put idolatry into a letter *made* (as our writer says) *for the conversion of the heathens. I have got you,* says Plato there, *a statue of Apollo, and Leptines conveys it to you: it's made by a young and good workman, whose name is Leochares:* this was that Leochares, afterwards a most famous statuary, celebrated by Pliny and Pausanias; and the time hits exactly, for then he was young. Which is as great a mark that the letter is genuine, as it is a demonstration that no *Christian* forged it. And lastly, the ground of this suspicion, a passage yet extant in it, and quoted by Eusebius and Theodorit,[o] is a weak and poor pretence. *As for the symbol,* says he, *or private mark you desire, to know my serious letters and which contain my real sentiments from those that do not so; know*

[o] Euseb. Præp. p. 530. Theod. Affect. p. 27.

and remember that τῆς μὲν σπουδαίας ἐπιστολῆς Θεὸς ἄρχει, Θεοὶ δὲ τῆς ἧττον, GOD *begins a serious letter, and* GODS *one that's otherwise.* This the Fathers (and not unjustly) made use of as some indication that Plato really believed but one God.

Which notion your learned doctor not approving, as contrary (in his opinion) to the Platonic system, he decries the letter as spurious. But this is no consequence at all, whatsoever becomes of Plato's true thoughts. The *symbol* he here speaks of made no part of the letters, nor began the first paragraph of them; for here's neither *θεὸς* nor *θεοὶ* in that manner in any one of the thirteen. 'Twas extrinsic (if I mistake not) to the letter, and was a mark at the top of it in these words, *σὺν θεῷ*, if it was a serious one; otherwise, *σὺν θεοῖς*. These two were the common forms in the beginning of writings or any discourse of importance: and in their usage were equivalent and indifferent; philosophers, as Xenophon and others, having it sometimes *σὺν θεοῖς*; and poets, as Euripides and Aristophanes, *σὺν θεῷ*. So that Plato could not have chosen a symbol fitter for his turn, being in neither way liable to any suspicion, nor any inference to be drawn from it to discover his real opinion. And yet I am so much a friend to Eusebius's remark, that I would not wish Plato had made the other choice, to put *σὺν θεοῖς* in his solemn letters, and *σὺν θεῷ* in his slight ones.

Had our writer carried his point in this instance of forgery, could he have done any great feats with it? Yes, a mighty one indeed! he could have added one *pious fraud* more to a hundred others that are detected ready to his hand. But, pray, who are the discoverers of them? The Christian priests themselves: so far are they from concealing or propagating them, or thinking their cause needs them. And I challenge him and the whole fraternity to shew one single one that they discovered, and owe not to the clergy. Even this mistaken one is picked from your Cudworth. Most able masters of stratagem, ever to hope to vanquish religion by arms borrowed from the priests! They may be

sure there's no danger of the strong town's being taken, while the garrison within can afford to lend the besiegers powder.

So far are the modern Christians from protecting old forgeries, that they are ready* to cry *spurious* without ground or occasion. As not only this XIII^th^ by Dr. Cudworth, and before him by Aldobrandinus, but another letter of Plato's is called in question by Menagius. *There are thirteen letters extant,* says he; *among which, one to Erastus and Coriscus, quoted by Clemens and Origen, is now wanting: but it seems to have been spurious, and forged by the Christians.*[p] Now all this is mere dream and delusion. That very letter is expressly named by Laërtius, *πρὸς Ἑρμείαν καὶ Ἔραστον καὶ Κορίσκον μία, one,* says he, *to Hermias and Erastus and Coriscus;* and it's the VI^th^ of the present set of thirteen; and the passages thence cited by Origen, Clemens, and Theodorit too, are extant there exactly; and there's nothing in it for the Christian cause but what may be proved as strongly from several other places of Plato's undoubted works. But what mischief have I been doing? I have prevented our *free-thinker;* who, after he had dabbled by chance in Menagius, might have flourished with a new forgery, and magisterially preached it to his credulous crew.

XLVII.

ARISTOTLE, the next in the *free-thinking* row, makes a very short appearance there, and goes quickly off the stage. His title hangs by two slender threads; first, *that he furnished articles of faith to the popish church, as Plato did to the primitive.*[q] Now I had thought that *creed-making* and *free-thinking* (even allowing the charge to be true) had been words of a disparate sense, that looked askew at each other: and how both of them come to sit so amicably upon Aristotle

[* are ready; 1*st ed.* "are too ready."—D.]

[p] Aldobrand. et Menag. ad Laërtium, iii. 61.

[q] Pag. 128.

surpasses my comprehension. But the matter is no more than this: as the primitive Christians, in their disputes with the pagans, made great use of the Platonic philosophy; not to coin articles, but to explain them, and refell* the adversaries' objections; so the schoolmen, in the popish times, had recourse to the Peripatetic, the sole system then in vogue. And yet these did not *make* articles from it: our author's weak if he thinks so: neither did Palavicino† so mean it. The peculiar doctrines of that church came from politics, not metaphysics; not from the chairs of professors, but from the offices of the Roman court. And the schoolmen were their drudges, in racking Aristotle and their own brains to gild and palliate such gainful fictions, and to reconcile them, if possible, to common sense, which ever hated and spurned them.

The second title Aristotle holds by is a charge of *impiety*;[r] which I must own promises well, if it could be made good; for that word and *free-thinking* are very closely combined, both by affinity and old acquaintance. *He was forced*, says he, *to steal privately out of Athens to Chalcis, because Eurymedon, a priest, accused him of* impiety, *for introducing some philosophical assertions contrary to the religion of the Athenians*. The voucher he brings for this is Diogenes Laërtius; but, under his old fatality of blundering, he summons a wrong witness. Origen,‡ indeed, says something to his purpose, that he was impeached διά τινα δόγματα τῆς φιλοσοφίας αὐτοῦ, *for some doctrines of his philosophy*. But Laërtius and Athenæus lay the indictment quite otherwise; *for impiety, in writing and daily singing a pæan* (a sort of hymn peculiar and sacred to the gods) to the memory of his

[* and refell; 1*st ed.* "and to refell."—D.]

[† On the words "*articles of faith*," in the passage of the *Discourse* above cited, Collins has this note—"*Senza Aristotele noi mancavamo di molti articoli di fede*. The celebrated saying of Cardinal Palavicino."—D.]

[r] Pag. 128.

[‡ Orig. *contra Celsum*, p. 51. ed. Cant. 1677.—D.]

patron Hermias, tyrant of Atarna, an eunuch, and at first a slave. This short poem, in the dithyrambic style, is yet extant in both those authors:*

'Αρετὰ πολύμοχθε,
Γένει βροτείῳ
Θήραμα κάλλιστον βίῳ, &c.

So the words are to be read and pointed. Neither is there any doubt but this was the sole charge which that sycophant brought against him: for if he had impeached his doctrines, there had been no need of this stale business; which was then of XX. years' standing, the death of Hermias happening in Aristotle's XL^th^ year, and this accusation in his LX^th^.† So that another of our writer's list is like to give him the slip: for the impeachment, we see, was not against the philosopher, but the poet; not for *free-thinking*, but the reverse of it, *superstition*; for deifying a mortal man, not for ungoding the deities.

XLVIII.

But he's now come to EPICURUS, *a man distinguished in all ages as a great free-thinker*;[s] and I do not design to rob our *growing sect* of the honour of so great a founder. He's allowed to stand firm in the list, in the right modern acceptation of the word. But when our writer commends his *virtues towards his parents, brethren, servants, humanity to all, love to his country, chastity, temperance, and frugality*; he ought to reflect that he takes the character from Laërtius,

[* Diog. Laërt. lib. v. segm. 7. p. 272. ed. Meib. Athen. lib. xv. c. 51. t. v. p. 547. ed. Schw. The common arrangement of the passage is—

'Αρετὰ πολύμοχθε γένει βροτείῳ,
Θήραμα κάλλιστον βίῳ, κ. τ. λ.

(Schw., as Bentley above, *βίῳ* (Dor. pro *βίου*); but Gaisf. Stob. *Flor.* t. i. p. 4, and Dindorf. Athen. t. iii. p. 1552, *βίῳ*.) "Athenée," says Ar. de La Chapelle (*La Frip. Laïque*, p. 400), "convient bien qu'Aristote composa cet hymme à l'honneur d'Hermias; mais il nie, et se met même en devoir de prouver que ce n'étoit pas un *péan*," &c.—D.]

[† LX^th^; *1st ed.* "LXI^th^."—D.]

[s Pag. 129.

a domestic witness, and one of the sect; and consequently of little credit where he speaks for his master. I could draw a picture of Epicurus in features and colours quite contrary; and bring many old witnesses, who knew and saw him, to vouch for it's likeness. But these things are trite and common among men of true letters; and our author and his pamphlet are too contemptible to require common-places in answer.

But the *noble quality* of all, *the most divine of his and all virtues was his friendship; so cultivated in perfection by him and his followers, that the succession of his school lasted many hundred years after all the others had failed.* This last part is true in the author* from whom it's taken; but our gleaner here misunderstands it. The succession indeed continued at Athens, in the garden dedicated to it, longer than the other sects possessed their first stations. But it's utterly false, that professors of it lasted longer in general than those of the others. Quite contrary: 'tis well known that the Platonists, Peripatetics, and Stoics, or rather a jumble and compound of them all, subsisted long after the empire was Christian; when there was no school, no footstep of the Epicureans left in the world.

But how does our writer prove that this *noble quality, friendship,* was so eminently cultivated by Epicurus? Why, *Cicero,* says he, *though otherwise a great adversary to his philosophical opinions, gives him this noble testimony.* I confess it raises my scorn and indignation at this mushroom scribbler, to see him by and by, with an air of superiority, prescribing to the whole body of your clergy the true method of quoting Cicero. They consider not, says he, he writes in *dialogue,* but quote any thing that fits their purpose, as Cicero's opinion, without attending to the person that speaks it; *any false argument, which he makes the Stoic or Epicurean use, and which they have thought fit to sanctify, they urge it as Cicero's own.*[t] Out of his own mouth this pert teacher of his betters:

[* Diog. Laërt.—D.] [t] Pag. 138.

Ἄλλων ἰατρὸς, αὐτὸς ἕλκεσι βρύων.*

For this very *noble testimony*, which *he urges* here as Cicero's own, comes from the mouth of Torquatus an Epicurean;[u] and is afterwards refuted by Cicero in his own name and person. Nay, so purblind and stupid was our writer, as not to attend to the beginning of his own passage, which he ushers in thus docked and curtailed: *Epicurus ita dicit*, &c. *Epicurus declares it to be his opinion, that friendship is the noblest, most extensive, and most delicious pleasure.* Whereas in Torquatus it lies thus: *The remaining head to be spoke to is* FRIENDSHIP; *which, if pleasure be declared the chief good,* YOU *affirm will be all gone and extinct:*[v] de qua Epicurus quidem ita dicit, *concerning which Epicurus declares his opinion*, &c. Where it's manifest that *affirmatis, you affirm*, is spoken of and to Cicero. So that here's an Epicurean testimony, of small credit in their own case (though our writer *has thought fit to sanctify it*), slurred upon us for Cicero's; and where the very Epicurean declares that Cicero was of a contrary opinion.

That an Epicurean, who professes to cultivate friendship for no other end than his own profit and pleasure, could not upon that principle be a true and real FRIEND, was the general affirmation of all the sects besides. Cicero, an Academic, is constant in this charge; as in the ii[d] book *De Finibus*,[w] where he answers this passage of Torquatus; in *Offices*, i. 2, cited here above, and in iii. 33; *De Amicitia*, c. 13; *Academ.* ii. 46; *De Nat. Deorum*, i. 44. 'Tis true, he does acknowledge that several of that sect were his own good friends, and men of virtue and honour; but then he declares he imputed this *naturæ, non disciplinæ, to their good nature, and not their doctrine;* their lives being better than their principles. I could add numbers of Greeks concurring in this accusation; but I'll content myself with Plutarch,

[* Eurip. *Frag. Inc. Trag.* ccxi. ed. Matt.—D.]

[u] De Fin. i. 20.

[v] De amicitia, quam, si voluptas summum sit bonum, affirmatis nullam omnino fore.

[w] De Fin. ii. 24, 25, 26.

whom our writer so extols for his *learning* and *virtue*, and places among his *free-thinkers*. He impeaches the Epicurean notions, as destructive not of *friendship* only, but of *natural affection*.[x] Nay, he sums up their common character in a few comprehensive words, *ἀφιλία, ἀπραξία, ἀθεότης, ἡδυπάθεια, ὀλιγωρία, unfriendliness, unactiveness, ungodliness, voluptuousness, unconcernedness*.[y] *These qualities*, says he, *all mankind, besides themselves, think inherent in that sect.* And what's like to become now of his hero's noble *quality?* Which of the *free-thinkers* must we believe? Our writer has mustered them together, as if they were *all of one side;* but when they are turned loose into the pit, they play exactly the same game as the famous Irishman's cocks did.

But see the sneer for the sake of which this Epicurean *friendship* was introduced by him: *We Christians*, says he, *ought still to have a higher veneration for Epicurus, because even our* holy religion itself *does not any where* particularly *require of us such a high degree of virtue*.[z] So that we are to supply and perfect the gospel moral out of an atheistical system; and Christ is to go to Epicurus, as to the superior *rabbi*. Impudent, and dully profane! In the Old Testament *friendship* is celebrated both by excellent precepts and eminent examples; but there was no occasion to do it in the New. That quality is so exalted and expanded there, that it loses its very name, and for *φιλία, friendship*, becomes *φιλαδελφία* and *ἀγάπη, brotherly love* and *charity*. Friendship in the pagan notion was *inter duos aut inter paucos*,[a] *circumscribed within two persons or a few;* whence Aristotle's saying was applauded, *ᾧ φίλοι οὐ φίλος, he that has friends has no friend:* but Christian friendship or charity, in the same degree of affection, is extended to the whole *household*

[x] Plutarch contra Coloten, p. 2037, 2041, 2058. [= *Mor.* t. v. pp. 359, 366, 389. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.—D.]

[y] Idem, p. 2018. [In the tract, Ὅτι οὐδὲ ξῆν ἐστιν ἡδέως, κ. τ. λ. *Mor.* t. v. p. 327. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.—D.]

[z] Pag. 129.—[The later 8vo ed. p. 130, and the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse*, p. 108, (see note, p. 290, 1) have —"require of us *that* virtue."—D.]

[a] Cicero de Amic. cap. v.

of faith, and in true good-will and beneficence to all the race of mankind. Not that particular friendships, arising from familiarity and similitude of humours, studies, and interests, are forbid or discouraged in the gospel; but there needed no precept to appoint and *require* what nature itself, and human life, and mutual utility, sufficiently prompt us to. A bridle was more necessary than a spur for these partial friendships; where the straight rule of moral is often bent and warped awry, to comply with interest and injustice under a specious name; as many of the most magnified instances sufficiently shew. But I'm insensibly here become a preacher, and invade a province which you clergymen, and the English of all others, can much better adorn.

XLIX.

Before I proceed to the next in his row, I shall make a general remark on our writer's judgment and conduct. He has brought the authors of three sects, Plato, Aristotle, and, with the greatest mark of approbation, Epicurus. Pray, how came he to drop the others? Aristippus the Cyrenaic cried up *pleasure* as much as that Gargettian did; had strumpets for his mistresses and she-disciples, as well as he; and well deserved the honour of being in the list. Even Diogenes the Cynic would have made a laudable *free-thinker,* for that single assertion, *that marriage was nothing but an empty name; and he that could persuade might lie with any woman that could be persuaded.*[b] Nay, even Zeno himself, the father of Stoicism, as gruff as he looked, might have enlarged our writer's catalogue, for some very *free thoughts* about the indifferency of things: *that all women ought to be common; that no words are to be reckoned obscene; that the secret parts need no covering; that incest and sodomy have no real crime nor turpitude.*[c] Where was our author's reading when he omitted such illustrious examples, that might have graced and dignified his list full as much as Epicurus?

[b] Τὸν πείσαντα τῇ πειστέᾳ συνεῖναι. Laërt. [vi. 72. p. 348, ed. Meib.—D.]

[c] Sextus Empir.

The remainder of his roll are not founders, but followers of the several sects. But be they one or the other, masters or scholars, what shallowness, what want of thought in our writer, to impose and press these upon us for our imitation in *free-thinking?* Many of his blunders are special, and reach no further than a paragraph; but here his stupidity is total; and in the whole compass and last tendency of his passages he's as blind as a mole. The great outcry against the church, which is always in his mouth, is its imposing* a system of opinions to be swallowed in the gross, without liberty of examining or dissenting. Allow it: though even this is false, the imposed opinions being few, and true, and plain; and a large field left open for freedom and latitude of thought; as his own book attests, which is mostly spent in collecting the various notions of your clergy. But how would our writer mend this? by recommending the freedom of the leaders and followers of the sects of philosophy? Ridiculous direction! Bid us copy free government from France, and free toleration from Spain. Those very sects, all, without exception, prescribed more imperiously than Christianity itself does; and not in a few generals, some easy articles of a short creed, but in the whole extent of reasoning, both natural and moral, and even in logical† inquiries. Any scholar of a particular sect, though commonly entered in it young, and by his parent's choice, not his own, was to be led shackled and hoodwinked all the rest of his life. He assented and consented to his philosophical creed in the lump, and before he knew the particulars. It was made the highest point of honour never to desert nor flinch: *Scelus erat dogma prodere, it was flagitious to betray a maxim: they were all to be defended, sicut mœnia, sicut caput et fama, like his castle, as dear as his life and reputation.*‡ And there were fewer instances then of leaving one sect for another, than now we have of defection to popery, or of apostacy to Mahometism. And I'll give our writer one

[* is its imposing; 1*st ed.* "is imposing."—D.]
[† even in logical; 1*st ed.* "even logical."—D.]
[‡ Cic. *Acad.* ii. 43, 44.—D.]

observation upon Cicero; better worth than all he has told us: that in all the disputes he introduces between the various sects, after the speeches are ended every man sticks where he was before; not one convert is made (as is common in modern dialogue), nor brought over in the smallest article. For he avoided that violation of *decorum;* he had observed, in common life, that all persevered in their sects, and maintained every *nostrum* without reserve. But of all sects whatever, the most superstitiously addicted and bigoted to their master were our writer's beloved Epicureans. In others, some free-thinking or ambitious successor might make a small innovation, and thenceforwards there was some scanty room for domestic disputation; but the Epicureans, those patterns of *friendship,* never disagreed in the least point;[d] all their master's dreams and reveries were held as sacred as the laws of Solon or the *twelve tables.* 'Twas *ἀσέβημα, παρανόμημα, unlawful, irreligious,* to start one free or new notion; and so the stupid succession persisted to the last in maintaining that the sun, moon, and stars, were no bigger than they appear to the eye, and other such idiotic stuff, against mathematical demonstration. *O fine liberty! O diligence and application of mind!* This is our writer's admired sect; these his saints and his heroes. Could it be revived again at Athens, he deserves for his superior dulness to be chosen *κηποτύραννος, the prince of the garden.*[e]

L.

We are advanced now to PLUTARCH, whom, though a *heathen priest,* he will dub a *free-thinker.* This is very obliging; but in the close of his catalogue he'll extend the same favour even to the Jewish prophets and the Christian priests. I perceive his politics, *totum orbem civitate donare,* to make all religions in the world free of his *growing sect.* It will grow the better for it; especially if he aggregates to it his Talapoins and his Bonzes. But wherein has Plutarch

[d] Laërtius, Numenius, &c.

[e] Laërt. in Epicuro. [p. 614. ed. Meib.—D.]

so obliged the fraternity? In his treatise of *Superstition*; a long passage out of which fills two of our writer's pages:[f] and yet the whole is pure impertinence, and contributes nothing to any *free-thinking purpose whatever.*

The design of Plutarch is to shew the deplorable misery of superstition when it is in extremity; when a man imagines the gods under the same idea we now do the devils; when he fancies them ἐμπλήκτους, ἀπίστους, εὐμεταβόλους, τιμωρητικούς, ὠμούς, μικρολύπους, *mad, faithless, fickle, revengeful, cruel, and disgusted at the smallest things; when he figures Diana, Apollo, Juno, Venus, as acting under the most frantic and raving distractions; when he approaches trembling to the temples, as if they were the dens of bears, dragons, or sea-monsters.*[g] When superstition, says he, is arrived to this pitch, it's more intolerable than atheism itself; *nay, it produces atheism, both in others that see them, and in themselves, if they can emerge to it. For when fools fly from superstition, they run into atheism, the other extreme,* ὑπερπηδήσαντες ἐν μέσῳ κειμένην τὴν εὐσέβειαν,[h] *skipping over right religion, that lies in the middle.* This is the sum of Plutarch's book: and what's all this to our writer's design? Superstition, under this character, is not possible to be found in Chris-

[f] Pag. 132, 133.—[where a note refers us to Plutarch's "Morals in English, vol. i. p. 162, &c."—ed. 1704. That version is "by several hands," and the treatise in question is "made English by William Baxter, Gent." Collins (as Bentley shews) has mangled the passage, and occasionally altered the words of Baxter.

In the French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291,) the following note is added to the passage from Plutarch: "Plutarque ajoute quelque chose ici, qui dépeint bien le trouble du superstitieux. *Ainsi*, dit-il, *on peut dire que le dormir du superstitieux est pour lui un* enfer, *où il est en proie à mille imaginations horribles, et à mille visions monstreuses et effrayantes de diables et de furies, qui tourmentent sa misérable âme, et lui ôtent tout son repos, par des songes dont elle se tourmente elle-même avec autant de soin que si elle y étoit contrainte par quelque autre.* Plutarque d'Amiot, p. 324. in 8. R. ajoutée." p. 194.—Ar. de La Chapelle (*La Frip. Laïque*, p. 429) is mistaken in saying that the French translator "a sauté une période" of the quotation from Plutarch, as exhibited in the editions of the *Discourse* in English.—D.]

[g] Plut. p. 295, 296. [= *Mor.* t. i. pp. 469, 470, 471, 472. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.—D.]

[h] Ibid. p. 299. [= *Mor.* t. i. pp. 474, 475. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.—D.]

tianity; it can be no where but under pagan and poetical theology. In other places[i] the same author scourges atheism as severely as superstition here; nay, he prefers a moderate superstition infinitely before it. But those passages are to be dropped; and this, out of so many volumes, is singled out as a flower; which yet serves to no better end than to shew our writer understands neither the language nor the sense.

Superstition, says he (by way of insertion[k]), *by which the Greeks meant* the fear of God, *and which Theophrastus in his* Characters *expressly defines so.* Not a syllable of this true. The Greeks meant not absolutely *fear*, but an *erroneous and vicious fear*; and Theophrastus defines it, not δέος, *fear*, but δειλία, *a vain fearfulness.** And so Cotta in Tully, where he blames such as our writer, *who not only root superstition up, in qua est* INANIS TIMOR *deorum*,[l] which *is a* VAIN FEAR *of the gods, but religion too, which consists in the pious worship of them.* Nor does the verse of Horace quoted by him in the margin,

Quone malo mentem concussa? timore deorum,†

prove his assertion. For there *malo*, which precedes, communicates its signification to *timore*: as if he had said plenarily, *malo timore, a wrong and vicious fear.* The same poet, *Odes*, i. 35, 36.

—— *Unde manum juventus*
METU DEORUM *continuit? quibus*
Pepercit aris?

without doubt means *religion*, and not *superstition*: and so does Terence in *Hecyra*:‡ .

Nec pol istæ METUUNT DEOS, *neque has respicere deos opinor.*

But there are other strokes in the version itself that shew his faithfulness and ability. *But of all fears*, says he, *none*

[i] Contra Coloten, et alibi.
[k] Pag. 132. [* See note, p. 322.]
[l] Nat. Deor. i. 42. ["in qua inest timor in. de."—D.]
[† *Sat.* ii. 3. 295.—D.] [‡ v. 2. 6.—D.]

confounds a man like the religionary fear.[m] Here, on purpose, he leaves his guide, the last English translator, who has it, *the vain religionary;* and the original, φόβος ὁ τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας,* *the fear arising from superstition.* He will fix a calumny on *religion* and the *fear of God,* in spite of his author.

His justness of thought is conspicuous in his version of this period: *Even slaves forget their masters in their sleep; sleep lightens the irons of the fettered; their angry sores, mortified gangrenes, and pinching pains allow them some intermission at night: but superstition will give no truce at night.*[n] If Plutarch had writ no better in the original, he would scarce have been now *the most known of all the ancients,*† but long ago had been forgot. Mind the absurdity: THEIR *angry sores,* that is, *of the fettered;* as if all captives, or criminals, or slaves in chains, *must needs* be full of sores and ulcers. And then *mortified gangrenes* allow some *intermission* of pain. If he had consulted physicians, he might have known that *mortified* parts can give no pain at all, and consequently have no *intermission.* And lastly, *sores and pains allow intermission* AT NIGHT: false; for night is the periodical time of aggravation of pains. *But superstition will give no truce* AT NIGHT. Is that such a wonder? even less truce than *in the day;* for darkness and solitude increase the fears. What a series of nonsense has he fathered upon Plutarch! Of which nothing appears in the Greek; neither *their sores,* nor *mortified gangrenes,* nor *at night.* I'll translate the passage‡ word for word: *Sleep lightens the irons of the fettered; inflammations of wounds, cancerous corrosions of the flesh, and all the most raging pains, dismiss men while they sleep: superstition alone gives no truce nor cessation even in sleep.* If this is not unworthy of Plutarch, the other certainly becomes none but our writer and his company.

[m] Pag. 132.—[The French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has "comme celle que *la religion superstitieuse* lui inspire," p. 193.—D.]

[* Plut. *Mor.* t. i. p. 457. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.—D.]

[n] Pag. 133.—[In this passage Collins has only transcribed Baxter's version: see note, p. 422.—D.]

[† *Discourse,* p. 131.—D.]

[‡ Plut. *Mor.* t. i. p. 458. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.—D.]

But now comes a signal instance of the lightness of his hand, and the heaviness of his head. In the middle of his long citation, page 133, after the words *at noon-day*,* he drops the period which immediately follows in the original, and transfers it into his 134th page, as if it was quoted from another place, and belonged to another head. Why this legerdemain? Why this mangling and luxation of passages? The reason is apparent; for Plutarch's own words, as they were represented in the last English version, not serving his turn, he quotes the place as it is translated forsooth in the *Characteristics*,† a book writ by an anonymous, but whoever he is, a very whimsical and conceited author.

O wretched Grecians (so that author renders Plutarch), *who bring into religion that frightful mien of sordid and villifying devotion, ill-favoured humiliation*‡ *and contrition, abject looks and countenances, consternations, prostrations, disfigurations; and, in the act of worship, distortions, constrained and painful postures of the body, wry faces, beggarly tones, mumpings, grimaces, cringings, and the rest of this kind.*[o] Thus far that nameless opiniatre: and our worthy writer introduces it with a grave air, *that Plutarch thus satirises the public forms of devotion; which yet are such as in almost all countries pass for the true worship of God.*[p] This would partly be true if those were really the words of Plutarch; but as not one syllable of them is found there, what must we think of this couple of corruptors and forgers? There is nothing in all this but their own *disfigurations* and *distor-*

[* At the corresponding place in the French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) an omission is marked thus .... p. 195; but the reader is not informed that the passage there omitted is the one quoted in the next page.—D.]

[† "as it is translated in the *Characteristicks*, vol. iii. p. 126"—a reference which is not found in the French translation of the *Discourse*, p. 196 (see note, p. 291). Bentley, writing in the character of a foreigner, affects here to be ignorant that Shaftesbury was the author of the *Characteristics*; as afterwards (sect. liv.) that Rowe was the translator of Lucan.—D.]

[‡ The French translation of the *Discourse* (see note p. 291) has "des humiliations indécentes, un visage contrefait, des yeux baisses," &c. p. 196.—D.]

[o] Pag. 134. [p] Ibid.

tions of the original; their own *mumpings* and *beggarly tones*, while they pretend to speak in Plutarch's voice.

Plutarch having observed, *that superstition alone allows no ease nor intermission even in sleep;* 'for their dreams, *adds he*, do as much torment them then as their waking thoughts did before. And then they seek for expiations of those visions nocturnal; charms, sulphurations, dippings in the sea, sittings all day on the ground.'

O Greeks, inventors of barbarian ills!

whose superstition has devised rollings in the mire and in the kennels, dippings in the sea, grovellings and throwings upon the face, deformed sittings on the earth, absurd and uncouth adorations.[q] This is a verbal interpretation of that place; except that for σαββατισμοὺς, *sabbatisms*, I have emended it βαπτισμοὺς, *dippings*: and this, if I mistake not, for very good reasons. Neither σαββατισμὸς nor σαββατίζειν is any where else heard of: and *Sabbata* being derived and borrowed from the Jews, it is inconsistent with ἐξευρόντες, *Greeks inventors* of such evils, that are more worthy of *barbarians*. But what weighs most, the author here describes the most painful and sorrowful instances of superstition; but the *Sabbata* was a joyful festival, made up of ease, finery, and good cheer. This is certain from the Jewish rituals, which exact that the very poorest should wear their best garments, and eat three meals every Sabbath. And that Plutarch knew

[q] Ὦ βάρβαρ' ἐξευρόντες Ἕλληνες κακά,

τῇ δεισιδαιμονίᾳ, πηλώσεις, καταβορβορώσεις, βαπτισμοὺς, ῥίψεις ἐπὶ πρόσωπον, αἰσχρὰς προσκαθίσεις, ἀλλοκότους προσκυνήσεις.—[Plut. *Mor.* t. i. p. 459. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.—Ὦ βάρβαρ', κ. τ. λ. is from the *Troades* of Euripides, v. 766. ed. Matt.—Wyttenbach, who was not acquainted with Bentley's emendation, βαπτισμοὺς for σαββατισμοὺς, has the following note on the latter word: "Judæorum more, observatio sabbathi, per jejunia et corporis vexationem: subinde notata Romanis scriptoribus ecclesiasticis σαββατίζειν: unde Augustinus Civ. D. xxii. 30. 5. *sabbatismus evidentius apparebit.* Plutarchus, ut res ipsa ostendit, non de Judæis ipsis loquitur, sed de Græcis superstitiosis, qui subinde illorum ritus imitabantur." t. vi. p. 490. The same learned editor gives προκαθίσεις instead of προσκαθίσεις.—D.]

this, appears from his *Symposiacs*, iv. 5, where he says, *the Jews honour the Sabbath, if possible, by drinking and carousing together;*[r] *or, if that cannot be done, some wine at least must be tasted:* and from this very tract, p. 294,* where he tells us, *that the Jews once suffered their walls to be taken by the enemies, without stirring to oppose them,* σαββάτων ὄντων ἐν ἀγνάπτοις καθεζόμενοι, *but sitting still, because it was Sabbath, in their new clothes never sent to the fuller;* which your last English version absurdly translates, *sitting on their tails.* From the whole I suppose it is plain that Plutarch would not mix a rite which he knew to be joyful with those other ceremonies the most mournful and desponding. But then βαπτισμοὺς, *dippings* in rivers or the sea,† exactly suits with the rest; both word and thing being immemorially known in Greece, and the most frequent way of expiation with melancholy and dejected bigots. Whence he himself has it a little before, βάπτισον σεαυτὸν εἰς θάλασσαν, *dip yourself in the sea:*[s] and that verse of Euripides became proverbial:

Θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τἀνθρώπων κακά: ‡

The sea does expiate all mortal ills.

And now I dare ask the reader if he has seen a more flagrant instance of unfaithfulness and forgery than this of our two writers. *Humiliation and contrition,* known words in your English liturgy, are to be traduced here under Plutarch's name. Where do those and their other phrases appear in the original? or where do the rites he really speaks of appear in your *form of worship?* Who among you *roll themselves in mire, or wallow in kennels?* a ceremony fit only to be enjoined to such *crack-brained* and *scandalous writers.*

[r] Πίνειν καὶ οἰνοῦσθαι. [*Mor.* t. iii. p. 514. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.]

[* = *Mor.* t. i. p. 468. ed. Wyttenb. 4to. who gives ἀγνάμπτοις: but see his note, t. vi. p. 498.—D.] [† or the sea; 1*st ed.* "or sea."—D.]

[s] Pag. 288. [= *Mor.* t. i. p. 459. ed. Wyttenb. 4to.—D.]

[‡ *Iphig. in Taur.* 1193. ed. Mark. = 1160. ed. Matt.—D.]

LI.

He's got now to his Latin free-thinkers, and the leader of them is VARRO, *the most learned of all the Romans*.[t] Now Varro being a known *follower of the old Academy, veteris Academiæ sectator*,[u] that is, a true Platonist, we know all his system of theology at once: and he cannot be called a *free-thinker* in either of the senses that our writer plays and shuffles with. Not an *atheist*, because the Platonic notions had *a great conformity with Christianity*;[v] not a *free reasoner*, or innovator, because being *addictus et juratus, engaged and sworn* to a sect in the lump, he can scarce arrive to the name and dignity of one of our writer's *half-thinkers*.

Varro, who had made more researches into the antiquities of Italy than any man before him, published two large and voluminous books, long ago lost, which he called *Antiquitates Rerum Humanarum et Divinarum*. In the latter of these, *About divine affairs*, the short remains of which are chiefly preserved in St. Austin *De Civitate Dei*, he distributed theology into *poetical* or *fabulous*, *philosophical* or *physical*, and *civil*. *Mythicon*, says he, *appellant, quo maxime utuntur poetæ; physicon, quo philosophi; civile, quo populi. Primum, . . quod dixi, in eo sunt multa contra dignitatem et naturam immortalium ficta. In hoc enim est, ut deus alius ex capite, alius ex femore sit, alius ex guttis sanguinis natus: in hoc, ut dii furati sint, ut adulteraverint, ut serviverint homini. Denique in hoc omnia diis attribuuntur, quæ non modo in hominem, sed etiam quæ in contemptissimum hominem cadere possunt*.[w] *In the* FIRST, says he, *are contained many fables, contrary to the dignity and nature of immortal beings; that one god should be born out of a head* (Minerva), *another out of a thigh* (Bacchus), *another from drops of blood* (Venus, Furies); *that gods were thieves* (Mercury), *were adulterers* (Jupiter), *were slaves to a man* (Apollo); *any thing, in short, that may be said not only of a man, but of the most despicable*

[t] Pag. 134.

[u] Cic. Acad. i. 2. August. de Civ. Dei, vi. 2; vii. 17; xix. i. 3, 4.

[v] Pag. 127.

[w] August. de Civ. Dei, vi. 5.

of men. This passage our learned writer cites, and ushers it in thus: *Varro, the most learned of all the Romans, speaking of* THEIR *theology*, says: how of *theirs*, that is, the *civil*, when he expressly says it of the *mythic*, or *poetical?* Was this downright dulness in our writer, or has it a mixture of trick and knavery? It is very plain, both in that chapter of St. Austin, and in many other places of that excellent work, that Varro with great freedom censured the *poetical* theology; as all sects whatever did, particularly the Stoics:[x] but the *civil*, or the Roman, he was so far from condemning, that he encouraged and multiplied it. He counted that performance *a great benefit to his countrymen, both in shewing them the gods they were to worship, and what power and office every god had;*[y] and *in many places religiously exhorted them to the worship of those gods:*[z] many uncouth names* of which he raised out of oblivion, assigned to the most sordid offices of low and servile life. And I verily believe neither Cicero, nor any one gentleman of that time, knew half of those gods, till Varro brought them to light out of the obscure superstitions of mean artificers and rustics. Where, then, was our writer's *judgment*, to list Varro among his *free-thinkers?* But his *learning*, too, is as much displayed in his accurate version. That period above, *ut deus alius ex capite*, &c. he renders thus,† *as gods begotten and proceeding from other gods' heads, legs, thighs, and blood.* Why, in the name of Priscian, is *alius ex capite, out of other gods' heads?* It is manifest the illiterate scribbler for *álius*

[x] See *Remark* XLV. page 405. [y] August. iv. 22.

[z] Ibid. 31. Varro . . . ad deos colendos multis locis velut religiosus hortatur. ["*cum* ad deos . . . . *hortetur.*"—D.]

[* The following is one of several passages which Ar. de La Chapelle (*La Frip. Laïque*, p. 451) has cited from August. *de Civ. Dei*, vi. 9: "Si duas quisquam nutrices adhiberet infans, quarum una nihil nisi escam, altera nihil nisi potum daret, isti ad hoc duas adhibuerunt deas, *Educam* et *Potinam.*"—D.]

[† P. 134. The later editions of the *Discourse* in English (see note, p. 291) exhibit no alteration in this passage: the French translation has "des dieux sortans et naissans de la tête, de la cuisse, ou même de quelques gouttes de sang des autres dieux." p. 197.—D.]

read it *altus* in the genitive. And why, forsooth, must he add *legs*, and pin his own ignorance on his author? Does any fable in the poetic system make a god born out of a *leg?* And why must plain *natus* in the Latin be transmuted into *begotten and proceeding?* for the pleasure of a silly fling at the Nicene and Athanasian creeds? Surely such a series of profaneness, ignorance, and nonsense, could never *proceed* from any *head* but such a one as his is.

But he has another passage from Varro (recorded, too, by St. Austin), where *de religionibus loquens, speaking of religious institutions,* he says, *Multa esse* VERA, *quæ non modo vulgo scire non sit utile, sed etiam tametsi falsa sint, aliter existimare populum expediat; et ideo Græcos teletas et mysteria taciturnitate parietibusque clausisse: that many things are* TRUE *which are not only not fit for the vulgar to know, but even if they should be false, it is fit the vulgar should think otherwise; and that therefore the Greeks kept their initiations and mysteries in secrecy and within private walls.*[a] This passage our writer proposes as a *discovery of Varro's free-thinking.* Now I should have thought it the very reverse. For first he says, *the things are* TRUE: that is contrary, no doubt, to our writer's *free-thinking:* and then, *that though they should be* FALSE (not that he says they are false), *the people ought not to know it:* that's flat and plain *priestcraft,* our writer's hate and aversion. How comes it, then, that so sagacious a person is enamoured of this passage? Why truly, as he has managed it, it will serve and bend to his purpose. For the period *multa esse vera, that many things are* TRUE, he has translated, *many things* FALSE *in religion.* What! *Vera, false?** *Non* an affirmative? 'Tis time for your governors *de les petites maisons* to take

[a] August. iv. 31.

[* As Collins (*Disc.* p. 134) gives the Latin at the foot of the page, "Multa esse *vera,*" &c. we may charitably suppose that this extraordinary error was merely a slip of the pen. It is not rectified, however, in the later eds. of the *Discourse* in English (see note, p. 291); but the French translation has "qu'il y avoit dans la religion plusieurs *vérités* qu'il n'étoit pas utile que le peuple approfondit." p. 197.—D.]

care of such a scribbler. But, besides his tricks in the version, he shews his slight of hand upon the original. For instead of *sed etiam tametsi falsa sint*, he exhibits it, *et quædam* [quæ] *tametsi falsa sint;* and so makes Varro say positively, *that some things are false.* Now, what *foundation for this in any manuscript or printed copy whatsoever?*[b] Is this his honesty in citations? Is this he that upbraids others with *corrupting* and *misapplying* of passages?

Yes; but St. Austin, after he had recited this passage, subjoins his own remark: *hic certe totum consilium prodidit velut sapientium, per quos civitates et populi regerentur: here Varro,* says he, *has discovered* (unawares, or by an obscure hint) *the whole design, as of wise statesmen, by whom societies were to be governed.* This place our author has borrowed;[c] but he might have produced more from the same Father; where he presses hard upon Varro for glozing and soothing the *civil* religion contrary to his own sentiments and conscience; since he owns, that *if he had founded a new community, he would have settled the public worship more* ex naturæ formula, *according to the model of nature; but now he was to explain it as he found it established.*[d] But of what use is this to our author? If there's any relish of *free-thinking* in it, it belongs to St. Austin, and not to Varro. The Christian Father speaks home, and condemns the *civil* theology equally* with the *poetical:* but the learned pagan, being himself a minister of state, and fearful of giving offence, (at that time

[b] Pag. 93.—[where Collins is speaking of an insertion made by the translators of the Bible in *Acts*, vii. 59; see p. 381.—D.]

[c] Pag. 135.—[In the 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) immediately after this remark of Augustin (with which, in the 8vo eds., Collins dismisses the subject of Varro) is the following addition: "Varro also gives this reason why he treats in his writings of human things before divine, *because cities are before the gods they have established, as the painter is before the picture he makes. (Quia civitates diis quos ipsæ instituerunt, ut pictor tabella, priores sunt.* Apud Sartorii Hypocrisin Gentilium, p. 7.)" p. 111. The French translation of the *Discourse*, p. 197, has the same addition, on which Ar. de La Chapelle indignantly comments at some length, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 469.—D.]

[d] August. iv. 3; v. 4.

[* equally: so 1*st ed.*; *ed.* 1743. "equal."—D.]

especially, when the Greek philosophy had not yet been made popular in the Latin tongue) used great reserve and dissimulation; and though in many parts he corrected the public superstition, in the main he fixed and promoted it. Not that he was himself superstitious; for in that very work he hints his own sentiments, though occultly and by the by: he declares, that for above 170 years the old Romans worshipped the gods without any images: *which manner*, says he, *if it had still continued, the gods would be adored with more purity and holiness*:[e] and for this he cites the Jewish nation, as a witness and example; and concludes with a declaration, that they who first instituted statues of the gods, *et metum* (*populis*) *demsisse et errorem addidisse, both took away the fear of the gods from the people, and gave them erroneous notions of them*: where note again, by the way, that *metus* is *religion*, and not *superstition*. And in other of his writings he on all occasions detected the artifices of knavish impostors: as in that at Falisci,[f] near Rome, where a few families, called Hirpi, pretended to have the gift of walking bare-foot upon burning cinders without being singed, at an annual sacrifice to Apollo; which Virgil magnificently expresses, *Æn.* xi. 786.

——— *Cui pineus ardor acervo*
Pascitur, et medium freti pietate per ignem
Cultores multa premimus vestigia pruna.

On which place Servius, the ancient scholiast, remarks, *that Virgil indeed says it was a miracle; but Varro, who is every where an overthrower of religion, says their feet were medicated and secured by an ointment*. How would our writer have flourished, if in his desultory gleanings he had met with this passage, *Varro ubique expugnator religionis!* He would have slighted St. Austin, and adhered solely to the grammarian, for proving Varro a *free-thinker*. And yet, upon the very same foot he must take St. Austin too into

[e] August. iv. 31. Quod si adhuc . . mansisset, castius dii observarentur.
[f] Plin. Hist. vii. 2.

his list, and every particular Christian that lived in the times of paganism. For as Servius here by *religio* means the *vulgar, popular, civil religion*, the Christians were in a complete sense, both in notion and fact, *expugnatores, the overthrowers* of such religion. And how little, then, is all this to our silly writer's purpose! The more Varros and great men he quotes for disbelieving pagan idolatry, the more justice he does to gospel truth, and the more reason to the Christian establishment.

LII.

The next that enters the scene, though he speaks but one sentence, is *the grave and wise* CATO *the Censor, who will for ever live in that noble* free-thinking *saying, recorded by Cicero, which shews that he understood the whole mystery of the* Roman religion as by law established: *I wonder*, said he, *how one of our priests can forbear laughing when he sees another.*[g] Very short, you see, but very pithy: and our writer thought he made a most capital jest and spiteful insinuation, when he said, *the Roman religion as by law established.* 'Tis easy to know what he alludes to: but by that time I have done this Remark and the rest, his own ignorance and stupidity will be so dragged into the light, that I myself shall hereafter *wonder if any of your priests can forbear laughing when he sees a* free-thinker.

CATO the elder, *homo antiqua virtute et fide*, a true old Roman, as his countrymen were before the Grecian literature got settlement among them, lived and died a *priest* himself, *e collegio augurum*; was as knowing and tenacious of the legal superstitions as any of his time; so as *he complained that many auspices, many auguries were quite lost and forgotten* * *by the negligence of the society of augurs.*[h] He was an enemy to all foreign rites, and jealous of the least inno-

[g] Pag. 135. [* *forgotten*; 1st ed. "*forgot.*"—D.]

[h] Multa auspicia, multa auguria [multa auguria, multa auspicia], quod Cato ille sapiens queritur, negligentia collegii amissa plane et deserta sunt. Cic. Divin. i. 15.

vation in the ancient religion and laws. He procured in the senate that Carneades the Academic and Diogenes the Stoic, ambassadors* from Athens, should immediately be dismissed, that they might not corrupt the youth. He had an aversion to all philosophy: in one of his books he said, Socrates (the first in our author's list) was a *prating and turbulent fellow*,[i] for introducing opinions contrary to his country's laws and customs. Now, one would hardly have guessed that a man of this character should ever make a good *free-thinker*. I am rather of opinion, that if Cato in his *censorship* had found one of that species, he would have taken quicker and better care of him than your patient government is like to do of yours.

But so it is: our writer has met with a *bon-mot* of this Cato's, which, according to his shallow understanding and silly interpretation, he presages *will ever live as a noble* free-thinking *saying*. I'll give it in Tully's words, from whom he here cites it; *Vetus autem illud Catonis admodum scitum est, qui mirari se aiebat, Quod non rideret haruspex, haruspicem cum vidisset*:[j] and he might have added another place, which, since Cato is not mentioned there, shews it became proverbial; *Mirabile videtur, Quod non rideat haruspex, cum haruspicem viderit*.[k] This our author has thus rendered: *I wonder*, said Cato, *how one of* OUR PRIESTS *can forbear laughing when he sees another*. What! *haruspex* a *priest* in general? And one of OUR, that is, the Roman priests? Then Cato, who was one, and lived to be the senior of them, would have libelled himself; he had ridiculed the laws established, which he always zealously maintained; he had become,

[* Ar. de La Chapelle (*La Frip. Laïque*, p. 473, 4,) quotes Plin. *Hist. Nat.* lib. vii. cap. 30, "Cato Censorius in illa nobili trium sapientiæ procerum ab Athenis legatione," &c. and refers to Cic. *de Or.* lib. ii. [cap. 37.] and A. Gell. lib. vii. cap. 14, to shew that there was a *third* ambassador, Critolaus: but Plutarch makes no mention of Critolaus in his account of the embassy: see *Opp.* t. ii. p. 594. ed. Reisk.—D.]

[i] Ἀδολον καὶ βλαυον. Plut. in Catone, p. 640. [= *Opp.* t. ii. p. 596. ed. Reisk. —D.]

[j] Divin. ii. 24.

[k] Nat. Deor. i. 26.

what he called Socrates, a *prating turbulent fellow*, in doing at Rome what he did at Athens. Surely there must be some mistake: and we shall find it lies no where else but in our writer's empty noddle.

The whole matter is but this: the college of augurs, of which Cato then was one, was of Roman institution, founded by Numa: their divination was made from observations of birds, and several other things within the sphere of their discipline; and as they were persons of the first quality, and all things were to be done *auspicato*, by their direction, they had vast influence and authority in all great affairs both of peace and war. But besides this native institution, a foreign and exotic sect of diviners had gradually grown in fashion, the *haruspices* of Tuscany, whose skill and province reached to three things, *exta, fulgura, et ostenta, entrails of cattle, thunders, and monstrous births*. That these were proper to Hetruria, from one Tages their founder; and not established at Rome, but sent for and fetched thither upon occasions, may easily be proved. They are scarce ever mentioned without that hint: *Haruspex Etruscus*, says Livy, v. 15; *Haruspices ex Etruria acciti*, xxvii. 37; *Haruspicum scientiam ex Etruria*, says Cicero, *Divin.* i. 2; *Haruspices ne ex Etruria arcessentur*, ii. 4; *Nostrorum augurum et Etruscorum* et *haruspicum* (dele et), *Nat. Deor.* ii. 4; and so Lucan, i. 584.

> *Hæc propter, placuit* Tuscos *de more vetusto*
> Acciri vates:

and Martial, iii. 24.

> *Quem* Tuscus *mactare deo cum vellet* haruspex.

This being observed and proved, the whole reason and drift of Cato's saying will immediately appear.

For it often happened that this pack of Hetruscan soothsayers gave their answers quite cross to what the Roman augurs had given: so that the two disciplines clashed; the one forbidding as unlucky and unsuccessful what the other

had allowed as auspicious and prosperous. An example of which is recorded by Cicero, *Nat. Deor.* ii. 4. While Tiberius Gracchus was creating new consuls, one of the nominators suddenly fell down dead: however, Gracchus proceeded and finished the creation. But soon after the people had scruples about it; and the *haruspices* being consulted said the creation was vicious. *How!* says Gracchus, *in a great rage; I not create them right, who am both* consul *and* augur, *and acted auspiciously? Do you,* Tuscans *and* barbarians,[1] *pretend to correct and control the auspices of the Romans? And so he bid them be gone.* This was done A. U. C. 591, when Terence's *Heautontimorumenos* was acted, and while Cato was alive.

'Tis true, Gracchus in this instance, having recollected himself, found he had omitted one circumstance directed by the books of *auguries,* and so submitted to the Tuscans, and added much to their reputation. But, however, it's plain from hence that there was no great kindness between the Roman augurs and them. For their disciplines proceeded upon quite different principles: if the one was supposed true, the other must generally be false. Cato therefore, without the least grain of *free-thinking,* nay, out of the true spirit of superstition, stood tightly for Numa's auguries; believed every tittle of them; and consequently took the Tuscan tribe for a set of cheats and impostors. Add to this his hatred to all rites that were foreign and exotic; add his own interest as an *augur,* against those rivals in credit and authority; and then wonder, if you can, why Cato should *wonder how one* haruspex *could forbear laughing when he saw another.*

And now take a view of our writer's learning and sagacity: *haruspex* rendered a *priest,* which would include in the affront both Cato himself and all his colleagues; and OUR *priests,* forsooth, when the satire is solely pointed at Tuscans and foreigners. And what's now become of his

[1] An vos Tusci ac barbari, &c.

ever-living saying? Where are now the footsteps of that *noble free-thinking* in it? of *understanding the whole mystery of the Roman religion as by law established?* Cato took the Tuscans for cheats, conscious of their own juggles; *therefore* he knew the *whole mystery*, and took himself too for a cheat. What, *Cato, the grave and the wise?* A consequence only fit for our scribbler. It was no *free-thinking* in Cato, but pure *polemic divinity*.* He adhered superstitiously to Numa's and his country's rites; and took the Tuscan discipline for nonsense, without being one jot wiser himself. And if this makes him a *free-thinker*, at this rate the *growing sect* will multiply prodigiously: all the pagans, that ate fish or pigeons, are to be admitted *free-thinkers*, because they contradicted the Syrians, who superstitiously abstained from both: the Tentyrites of Egypt were certainly *free-thinkers*, because they destroyed and fed on *crocodiles*, which the Ombites, their neighbours, worshipped as gods: nay, the very Tuscan *haruspices* were passable *free-thinkers*, for no doubt they reparteed upon Cato, and thought as meanly of the Roman divinations as he did of theirs.

To shew our learned writer what a *free-thinker* Cato was, I'll give him some choice instances out of his book De Re Rustica, which is certainly Cato's own, and so quoted by all the ancients: his annual offering to Mars Silvanus for the health of his black cattle;[m] another to Jupiter Dapalis;[n] another to Ceres, Janus, Jove, and Juno;[o] an atonement for the lopping of a wood;[p] a sacrifice for the lustration of his grounds, to preserve the grass, corn, fruits, cattle, and shepherds from disasters;[q] and all these with their several ceremonies as awkward and absurd as those of the Pawawers. But the prime of all is his charm for a *luxation* or *fracture*; which I'll recommend to our writer with a *probatum est*,

[* An allusion to the *Discourse*, p. 101: "Nay, so little *polemic divinity* was there among them [the ancients] . . . . that there are no materials for that sort of history called *ecclesiastical history*."—D.]

[m] Cato de Re Rust. c. 83. [n] 132.
[o] 134. [p] 139. [q] 141.

when he has any thing *broken or out of joint. Take,* says he, *a green reed, and slit it along the middle; throw the knife upwards, and join the two parts of the reed again, and tie it so to the place broken or disjointed;* and say this charm, *Daries, dardaries, astataries, dissunapiter;* or this, *Huat hanat huat, ista pista fista,* domiabo damnaustra: this will make the part sound again.*[r] Is not this an excellent specimen of Cato's *free-thinking?* Does not this gibberish demonstrate his penetration into *mysteries?* Is it not worthy of that refined age when *consuls* and *dictators* were chosen from the plough? Nor can our author say, that this is a spurious receipt; for Pliny[s] mentions this very charm under Cato's name and authority; though he excuses himself from repeating it, because of its silliness. But as poorly as our writer comes off with Cato the elder, I fancy he'll anon have still worse success with Cato the younger.

LIII.

But before he comes to him, he introduces CICERO, as a distinguished and eminent *free-thinker;* in which section he seems to have taken peculiar pains, and to strut with an air of arrogance quite above his ordinary mien. He summons all your divines to receive his laws for reading and quoting, and to govern themselves by his instructions both in the pulpit and the press. But how does this scenical commander, this hero in buskins, perform? So wretchedly and sorrily, so exactly to the same tune and his wonted pitch, that he has not struck one right stroke either in Cicero's general character, or in any passage of his that he quotes incidentally.

The first word he opens with is this: *that though Cicero*

[* Cat. eds. "sista."—D.] [r] 160.

[s] Nat. Hist. xvii. in fine. Carmen contra luxata membra, jungenda arundinum fissuræ, cujus verba inserere non equidem serio ausim, quamquam a Catone prodita. ["Quippe cum averti carmine grandines credant plerique: cujus verba inser. non equi. ser. aus., quamq. a Cat. prod., cont. lux. memb., jung. arund. fiss."—D.]

was chief priest and consul, &c.[t] And what does he mean by *chief priest?* no doubt he means *pontifex maximus;* for no other word in all the sacerdotal colleges of the Romans can admit of that version. Now a list and succession of the *pontifices maximi* (Metellus Dalmaticus, Mucius Scævola, Metellus Pius, Julius Cæsar, Æmilius Lepidus), which includes* all Cicero's time, was ready drawn to our writer's hand both in Panvinius's *Fasti* and in Bosius *De Pontificatu Maximo.* He was so far from being *chief pontif,* that he was never of that order; not one of the whole XV.; as appears from his oration *Pro Domo ad Pontifices,* spoken in his L^th^ year. He was a *priest* indeed, as I have said before,† being made *augur* in his LIV^th^ year, and succeeding Crassus the younger, who, with his father, was slain in Persia. What scandalous and puerile ignorance is this, in a teacher, forsooth, of the clergy, who are teachers appointed! Cicero the *chief priest?* or rather our writer the *chief blunderer?* He never meddles with the word *priest* but nonsense is his expiation for it: it sticks to him like Hercules' shirt, and will last him, like that, to his funeral.

Another observation he thus dresses: *that Cicero gives us his own* picture, *and that of the greatest part of the philosophers, when he produces this as an instance of a* probable opinion, *that* they who study philosophy don't believe there are any gods; *that is, that there existed no such gods as were believed by the people.*[v] Now grant our author this, and yet he obtains no more by it, than that Cicero, with most of the philosophers, disbelieved the *poetical* and *civil* theology of the pagans. And if this *picture* so much pleases

[t] Pag. 135.—[The later 8vo ed. of the *Discourse,* ibid. (see note, p. 290, 1), and the 12mo ed. p. 112, have "was *a* priest;" and so the French translation, p. 198.—D.]

[* includes; 1*st ed.* "concludes."—D.] [† See p. 388.—D.]

[v] Pag. 136.—[The French translation of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has, "On peut dire que Cicéron .... a voulu nous laisser son caractère et celui de la plupart des philosophes, *lorsque rapportant ses sentiments et les leurs,* il fait passer pour probable que," &c. p. 199.—D.]

him, or has such strong lines and features of *free-thinking* in it, the very herd of Christians have a better title to it than any of the philosophers. We are all *free-thinkers* on that topic, unless our writer dissents from us, and would recur to the old worship of Bacchus and Venus.

But the misery of it is, this passage of Cicero is quite misrepresented; nay, it proves the very reverse to what he infers from it. *Every argumentation,* says Tully, *ought either to be probable or demonstrative. A thing probable is either what is generally true, or what is so in opinion and common conceit. Of the first sort this is one, If she's a mother, she loves her son: of the second, which consists in opinion, hujusmodi sunt probabilia, these are examples: impiis apud inferos pœnas esse paratas; eos, qui philosophiæ dent operam, non arbitrari deos esse: that torments in hell are prepared for the impious; that philosophers don't think there are gods.*[w] Where it's evident to a sagacious reader that Tully gives two instances of probables, which really he thought false. For *probabile* in Latin takes in several ideas of your English *probable, plausible, likely, specious, seeming;* whether it really be *true or false, sive id falsum est sive verum,* as Tully here says express. The first of these, about *torments of hell,* was then a current, passable, probable assertion; but Tully himself disbelieved it,[x] and gives it here as a notion vulgar but false. And the second likewise, *that philosophers are atheists,* was a staple mob opinion; especially at that time, when Lucretius, Amafinius, and other Epicureans, were the sole retailers in Latin; that sect having in that language got the start of the rest. But the orator here exhibits it not as a true but a false probable, and contrary to his own sentiment and example.[y] And what's become now of the *picture?* 'Tis like the old story* of the horse painted tumbling; which posture being not liked by the purchaser,

[w] De Inventione, i. 29.

[x] Tuscul. i. 5, 6. et alibi.

[y] Tuscul. De Legibus, &c.

[* "Ælian. *Var. Hist.* lib. xiv. cap. 15." Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque,* p. 501.—D.]

upon inverting the piece the horse was a-running. Our writer here imagined that Cicero was *pictured* an infidel; and, to his great disappointment, he's painted a believer. But see, by the way, the great sincerity of our writer: in his marginal citation* he has dropt the first instance about *hell-torments*, and given the latter only about *believing no gods*; and to disguise it the more, for *hujusmodi sunt probabilia*, he puts it *est probabile*; where any person, who looks no further, must certainly be imposed on. But if our writer had given both, the vigilant reader, without stirring from the margin, had detected the nonsense. For the two instances of probable being both of a kind, either both true or both false, if the first is supposed *false*, the latter must be so too; and so our writer is frustrated. But if the latter is supposed *true* (as our writer propounds it), then the first must be allowed so too, about the *torments of hell*; which our writer abhorring, as the most ghastly *picture* in nature, removed it out of his book; and so the reader seeing but one, could not discover the painter's true meaning. O dulness, if this was done by chance! O knavery, if it was done by design!

His next remark upon Cicero is still more *mumping* and *beggarly*;† that were it not for his pride and insolence, I should really commiserate him. He'll prove out of the *Tusculan Questions* that Cicero was against the *immortality of the soul*; which is exactly as if he should prove from these Remarks of mine that I am a member of his club. But of that anon: in the mean time, as a cast of his occasional learning, he makes the dialogist to be T. Pomponius Atticus, a great friend of Cicero's, who writ a whole volume of letters to him. The interlocutor in the *Tusculans* is marked by the letter A., as Cicero is by M.: and though some old copiers,

[* Which stands thus: "Hujusmodi est probabile—Eos, qui dent philosophiæ operam, non arbitrari deos esse. *De Inventione*, l. i. *Opera*, ed. Gron. f. 157." p. 136.—D.]

[† An allusion to Shaftesbury's translation of the passage of Plutarch: see p. 425.—D.]

and authors too, believed A. signified Atticus, yet what was pardonable in them is, at this time of day, and in a book of defiance too, a most shameful blunder in our writer.* The person A. was *adolescens, a youth,* as appears from ii. 11. *At tu, adolescens, cum . . . . dixisses, &c.* How, therefore, can this be Atticus, *who was then an old man,* as your learned Davisius remarks on the place ?[z] Cicero, when he writ the *Tusculans,* was in his great climacteric, and Atticus was two years older than he. For Nepos says in his life, *that* the Cæsarean civil war broke out when Atticus was about LX., *cum haberet annos circiter sexaginta;* but Cicero was then LVIII. Again he says, Atticus died LXXVII. years old complete, *Domitio et Sosio Coss.* And by that reckoning too he was born two years before Cicero. So that our writer has made a hopeful youth of him, when he was going of LXV.; and makes Cicero call a man *youth* who was older than himself. Besides this, who but our mirror of learning could be ignorant that Atticus lived and died an Epicurean? but this dialogist is entirely against that sect, as appears through the whole.[a] And lastly, what I have noted above, in my XLIX[th] remark, if Atticus here was the discourser with Cicero, he would adhere to his old principles, and be brought over in nothing: but this *youth,* this inquirer, is a convert throughout; and, convinced by good arguments, recedes from every thing that he advances at first. So that there's a vast difference in the manner of dispute that's exhibited in the *Tusculans*† from what appears *In Academicis, De Finibus, De Natura Deorum,* and *De Divinatione.* In the latter no man concedes; in the *Tusculans* no man resists. These last were *scholæ,* as Cicero, from the Greeks, calls them, discourses without an antagonist; rather *audiences* than *conferences. Which manner,* he says, *was used among*

[* But the words of Collins are, "says he to his dialogist Atticus (or his *auditor,* as some conceive)." p. 136.—D.]

[z] Atticus tunc temporis senex erat. *Davis. ad Tuscul.* i. 5.

[a] See Tuscul. i. 23, 32, 34.

[† *Tusculans;* 1st ed. "*Tusculanæ.*"—D.]

all the philosophers, even in the Academy itself: qui quæsivit aliquid, tacet: he that has proposed a question, holds his tongue.[b] *For as soon as he has said,* It SEEMS to me that pleasure is the chief good, *the philosopher disputes against it in a continued discourse: so as it may easily be understood how they that say a thing* SEEMS *to them, are not really of that opinion, but want to hear it refuted.* This very manner, which Cicero here describes in his LXII[d] year,* he executed the year after in his *Tusculans*:† where when A. the auditor says, *It* SEEMS *to me that death is an evil; that pain is the greatest of all evils; that grief or uneasiness may happen to the wise man; that the wise man is not free from all perturbation of mind; that virtue alone is not sufficient to a happy life,* (which make the subject of the V. books); it's plain, by Cicero's own comment, that A. is of contrary sentiments, and desires to have all those positions confuted; which Cicero performs to his satisfaction and applause. This being observed and premised, let us now see what our sagacious writer can fetch from the *Tusculans.*

Why Tully, says he, *after having mentioned the various notions of philosophers about the nature of the soul, concludes from them that there can be nothing after death.*[c] Now, if a foreigner may judge of your language, THE VARIOUS *notions* can mean no less than *singulas opiniones, the several,* and even *all* the notions of the philosophers; which being supposed, our writer will stand convicted either of such dulness, or of such impudence, as nothing can match but his own book. After Cicero had enumerated the several opinions about the soul, that it was the *brain,* or the *heart,* or the *blood,* or *fire,* or *breath,* or *harmony,* or *nothing at all,* or an *essential number,* or a *rational substance,* or a *fifth essence;*

[b] De Finibus, ii. 1.

[* in his LXII[d] year; 1*st ed.* "in his year LXII."—D.]

[† *Tusculans*; 1st ed. "*Tusculanæ.*"—D.]

[c] Pag. 136.—[The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has—"the various notions of *several* philosophers about the nature of the soul, he concludes that there can be nothing after death, *if any of their notions be true.*" p. 113. And so the French translation, p. 199.—D.]

whichsoever of these, says he, *is true, it will follow that death is either a good, or at least not an evil.* For if it be *brain, blood,* or *heart,* it will perish with the whole body; if *fire,* it will be extinguished; if *breath,* it will be dissipated; if *harmony,* it will be broke; not to speak of those that affirm it is *nothing. His sententiis omnibus, nihil post mortem pertinere ad quemquam potest; according to all these notions* (the seven last repeated), *there can be no concern nor sensation after death:* death therefore is no *evil. Reliquorum* (*autem*) *sententiæ, &c. But the other opinions* (the three remaining) *give hope that the soul, after it has left the body, mounts up to heaven as its proper habitation:* death therefore may be a *good.*[d] Now, can any thing be plainer than the tour of this paragraph? Ten opinions there are in all; the first seven make death no misery; the last three make it a happiness. What then was our writer's soul? was it *brains,* or *guts,* or rather *nothing at all,* when he thus maimed and murdered the sense of his author? *From* THE VARIOUS *notions he concludes!* as if the *seven* were all he had mentioned? as if the *three* last were not those he espoused? as if the authors of the *seven* were not, in his esteem, *plebeii et minuti philosophi, plebeian and puny philosophers,* not worthy of that name? but our writer has so long desponded *of mounting up to heaven,* that he cannot bear it even in the style of a pagan: it raises an envious despair, and spreads it over his soul. A most just and proper punishment for such reprobates to immortality!

*Virtutem videant, intabescantque relicta.**

But our writer goes stumbling on, and adds, *that as to Plato's arguments for the immortality of the soul, Cicero says to his dialogist, Let us not produce them, and let us lay aside all our hopes of immortality. By which the other understood him to deny the immortality of the soul; as is evident from his answer which follows: What! do you disappoint me, after you had raised in me such an expectation? Truly, I*

[d] Tuscul. i. 11.

[* Pers. iii. 38.—D.]

had rather be mistaken with Plato, whom I know how much you esteem, and whom I admire on your authority, than be in the right with others.[e]

Even my pen would refuse to be employed in such trash, were it not to chastise our writer's confidence, who, unqualified to understand one single page of Cicero, presumes to set up for his commender and patron,

*Ἀνδρὸς, ὃν οὐδ' αἰνεῖν τοῖσι κακοῖσι θέμις,**

nay (which all the Muses avert) for his revisor and editor. Your gentry, it seems, were henceforward to taste Cicero through the fetid and poisonous notes of the *atheistical* sect. *If Cicero's works*, says he, *come once to be generally read, as of all human writings they best deserve!*[f] Goodly and gracious! what an honour is this to Cicero's ashes! This is what the old tragic† liked, *laudari a laudato viro.* But pray, when was it that he was *not* generally read? or rather, when did the stupid sect begin to read him? By the patterns they have given us, they have just as much title to recommend Cicero upon their own taste and skill, as before they had to recommend the *Samaritan Chronicle.*[g]

In the passage now before us, after the orator had proved the immortality of the soul from authority and tradition, *the agreement of all antiquity, the consent of all nations, the doctrine of the Pythagorean school;*[h] those ancients, says he, seldom gave reasons for their opinions, their scholars acquiescing in the bare precept and maxim: but Plato did

[e] Pag. 137.

[* See note, vol. ii. p. 272 of the present ed. of Bentley's *Works*; where I neglected to observe that in the line,

Βωμὸν Ἀριστοτέλης ἐνιδρύσατο τόνδε Πλάτωνος,

we ought to read, for the sake of the measure, *ἱδρύσατο*: vide *Anth. Gr. ex rec. Br.* (ed. Jacobs.) t. iv. p. 233.—D.]

[f] Pag. 140.

[† "*Lætus sum laudari me*, inquit Hector, opinor apud Nævium, *abs te, pater, a laudato viro.*" Cic. *Epist. Fam.* xv. 6.—D.]

[g] *Remark* XXVII.

[h] Omnem antiquitatem. Consensus nationum omnium.

not only transmit the doctrine, but produced reasons and arguments to establish it: *Sed rationes etiam attulisse; quas, nisi quid dicis, prætermittamus, et hanc totam spem immortalitatis relinquamus; which arguments, unless you say otherwise, let us pass over, and lay aside this whole hope of immortality.*[1] The meaning of which is most plain, if we reflect, that the question here to be debated was only this, *It* SEEMS *to me that death is an evil:* which Cicero had already refuted, even upon the scheme of the soul's extinction; without need of engaging deeper in the proofs of immortality. So that here, in the Socratic way of dialogue, with εἰρωνεία, *dissimulation and urbanity,* he seems willing to drop the cause, on purpose to raise the interlocutor's appetite. Who well knowing this was but a feint, and that Cicero wanted a little courting to proceed, *What,* says he, *do you now leave me, after you have drawn me into the highest expectation?* Pray proceed with Plato's arguments: *quocum errare mehercule malo, quam cum* ISTIS *vera sentire, with whom* (in this affair) *I had rather choose to be mistaken than be in the right with* THOSE mean souls that are content with extinction. Upon which, says the orator to him, *Macte virtute, God bless you with that brave spirit: I myself too should willingly mistake with him:* and so he enters upon and exhausts the whole Platonic reasoning for the soul's immortality. Now what oddness, what perverseness of mind in our scribbler, to infer from this paragraph *that the interlocutor thought Cicero denied the immortality of the soul!* Is it not just the reverse? But what need I wonder; when none but such a crooked and cross-grained block could ever be shaped into an atheist?

And now we are come to his general character of Cicero, and the new key to his works, which our bungler has made for the use of your clergy. *He professed,* he says, *the Academic or Sceptic philosophy; and the only true method of discovering his sentiments is to see what he says himself, or under the person of an Academic. To quote any thing else*

[1] Tuscul. i. 17.

from him as his own is an imposition on the world, begun by some men of learning, and continued by others of little or none. This is the sum of our author's observations;* in which there is part vulgar and impertinent, and part false and his own.

The Academic or Sceptic philosophy! He might as well say, the Popish *or* Lutheran religion; the difference between those being as wide as between these. *A common imposition on the world!* Where, or by whom? Has not Cicero in his disputations represented the systems of the several sects with more clearness and beauty than they themselves could do? Such passages have been, and will be, quoted out of Cicero indeed, for the elegancy of them; not as his own doctrines, but as those of the respective† sects that there speak them. And what harm is this? The reasoning is the same, from what quarter soever it comes; and the authority not the less, though transferred from Cicero to a Stoic. But the *men of learning* have blundered, and not nicely distinguished Cicero from the Stoic. When he pleases to name those, I'll produce him a *man of none*, who has stupidly confounded Cicero with the Epicurean.‡ And then his sagacious hint, *that Cicero's true sentiments are to be seen in the person of the Academic!* This he thought he was safe in; and yet it is as true as it will appear strange, that his sentiments are least, or not at all, to be seen there: of which as briefly as I can.

The Platonic Academy dogmatised, or delivered their doctrines for fixed and certain, as the Peripatetics and Stoics did. But in the tract of succession, one Carneades, a man of great wit and eloquence, on purpose to shew both, made an innovation in the Academy. By the notion of *fixed and certain* (*fixa, certa, rata, decreta*) he was pinned down to one system; and his great parts wanted more room to expa-

[* *Discourse*, p. 135, &c.—D.]

[† not as his own doctrines, but as those of the respective; 1*st ed.* "but not as his own doctrines, but of the respective."—D.]

‡ *Remark* XLVIII. p. 417.

tiate and flourish in: he contrived, therefore, a way to get it: he denied the *certainty of things*, and admitted of no higher a knowledge than *probability and verisimilitude*. Not that he did not as much believe and govern himself in common life upon what he called *highly probables*, as the others did upon their *certains;* but by this pretty fetch he obtained his end, and became disputant universal, *pro omnibus sectis et contra omnes dicebat*. Did the Stoics assert a thing for certain? He would demolish that certainty from Epicurean topics. Again, did these last pretend to any certainty? He would unsay what he spoke for them before; and attack them with Stoical arguments, which just now he had endeavoured to baffle. This method gave name to the New Academy: but it had few professors while it lasted, and lasted but a little time; requiring such wit and eloquence, such laborious study in all sects whatever, and carrying in it's very face such an air of pride and ostentation, that very few either could or cared to espouse it.

However, this very sect, then deserted and almost forgot, did best agree with the vast genius and ambitious spirit of young Cicero. He was possessed of oratory in it's perfection; and he had added philosophy under the best masters of all sects, Diodotus, Antiochus, Philo, Posidonius, and others: he would not confine himself to one system, but range through them all; so the New Academy was chosen, as the largest field to shew his learning and eloquence. Which turn when he had once taken, he was always to maintain: he was to rise no higher than *probability*, the characteristic of the sect. For this was their badge of servitude, though they boasted of more freedom than the others. Did a Stoic assert the *certainty* of Divine Providence? You are tied down, says an Academic; it's only *a probable*. You are tied as much, replies the Stoic; for though you believe it as firmly as I, you dare not say it's *certain*, for fear of clashing with your sect.

If we take Cicero under this view, we shall then truly be qualified to interpret all his writings. And first we shall

find, what I said before, and which at once breaks to pieces our writer's new key, that the Academic objections, which in his philosophical conferences are ever brought against the other sects, is the most unlikely place where to find his real sentiments. For that being the privilege of the sect, to speak *pro* or *con* as they pleased, *contra omnia dici oportere et pro omnibus,*[k] *contra omnes philosophos, et pro omnibus dicere;*[l] they very frequently opposed *non ex animo, sed simulate, not heartily, but feignedly;*[m] not what they really believed, but what served the present turn. In *De Natura Deorum,* when Balbus the Stoiç had spoken admirably for the existence of the gods and providence, Cotta the Academic (though he was a priest, one of the *pontifices*) undertakes the opposite side, *non tam refellere ejus orationem, quam ea quæ minus intellexit requirere; not so much to refute his discourse as to discuss some points he did not fully understand;*[n] and after he had finished his attack with great copiousness and subtilty, yet in the close he owns to Balbus, *that what he had said was for dispute's sake, not his own judgment; that he both desired that Balbus would confute him, and knew certainly that he could do it.*[o] And Cicero himself, who was then an auditor * at the dispute, though of the same sect with Cotta, declares his own opinion, *that the Stoic's discourse for providence seemed to him more* PROBABLE *than Cotta's against it;* which he repeats again in *De Divinatione,* i. 5. And what now becomes of our writer's *true method* and rule? Whatsoever is spoken under the person of an Academic, is that to be taken for Cicero's sentiment? Why Cicero declares here, that he sided with the Stoic against the Academic; and whom are we to believe, himself or our silly writer?

When Cicero says above, that the stoical doctrine of providence seemed to him more PROBABLE, if we take it aright, it carries the same importance as when a Stoic says

[k] Acad. ii. 18. [l] Nat. Deor. i. 5. [m] Nat. Deor. ii. *fine.*
[n] Nat. Deor. iii. 1. [o] Nat. Deor. iii. *fine.*
[* then an auditor; 1*st ed.* "then auditor."—D.]

it's CERTAIN and DEMONSTRABLE. For, as I remarked before, the law, the badge, the characteristic of his *sect* allowed him to affirm no stronger than that: he durst not have spoken more peremptorily about a proposition of Euclid, or what he saw with his own eyes. His *probable* had the same influence on his belief, the same force on his life and conduct, as the others' *certain* had on theirs. Nay, within his own breast he thought it as much *certain* as they; but he was to keep to the Academic style, which solely consisted in that point, that nothing was allowed *certum, comprehensum, perceptum, ratum, firmum, fixum;* but our highest attainment was *probabile et verisimile.* He that reads his works with penetration, judgment, and diligence, will find this to be true, that *probable* in his sect is equivalent to *certain.* For what he says of Socrates exactly fits himself; where reporting his last words, *Whether it's better to live or die, the gods alone know; of men I believe no one* knows:* as to what Socrates speaks, says he, that none but the gods know whether is better, *he himself* KNOWS *it; for he had said it before: sed suum illud, nihil ut affirmet, tenet ad extremum; but he keeps his manner to the last, to affirm nothing for* CERTAIN.[P]

If we seek, therefore, for Cicero's true sentiments, it must not be in his disputes against others, where he had license to say any thing for opposition sake; but in the books where he dogmatises himself; where, allowing for the word *probable,* you have all the spirit and marrow of the Platonic, Peripatetic, and Stoic systems; I mean his books *De Officiis, Tusculanæ, De Amicitia, De Senectute, De Legibus;* in which, and in the remains of others now lost, he declares for the being and providence of God, for the immortality of the soul, for every point that approaches to Christianity. Those three sects he esteems as the sole ornaments of philosophy; the others he contemns; and the Epicureans he lashes throughout, not only for their base and abject principles, but for their neglect of all letters, eloquence, and science.

[* *No one;* 1st ed. "*none.*"—D.]

[P] Tuscul. i. 42.

And I must do him this justice, that as his *sect* allowed him to choose what he liked best, and what he valued as most *probable*, out of all the various systems, he always chooses like a knowing and honest man. If in any point of moral, one author had spoken nobler and loftier than another, he is sure to adopt the worthiest notion for his own, and to clothe it in a finer dress with new beauties of style.*

[* I may here observe, that to the note, at p. 139 of the first ed. of the *Discourse*, which commences, "And yet sometimes his [Cicero's] zeal against what he took to be superstition made him so far forget himself, as to speak that in his orations which he could only do with safety in an assembly of philosophers," Collins in the later 8vo ed. ibid. (see note, p. 291), added another "instance" from Cicero's works; and that in the 12mo ed. p. 115, he threw the whole note into the text, altering the beginning thus: "And yet sometimes his zeal against what he took to be superstition made him so far forget *a maxim of his own*, as to speak," &c.; and citing at the foot of the page: "Queritur sintne dei, nec ne sint. Difficile est negare. Credo, si in concione quæratur: sed in ejuscemodi sermone et consessu, facillimum. De Nat. Deor. lib. i." The French translation of the *Discourse*, p. 204, agrees with the 12mo ed.—The dishonesty of Collins in the above quotation from Cicero is exposed by Ar. de La Chapelle, *La Frip. Laïque*, p. 544.—D.]

TANTUM.

REMARKS

UPON A LATE

DISCOURSE OF FREE-THINKING:

BY

PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS.

PART THE THIRD.

(From ed. 1743.)

REMARKS.

LIV.

OUR author, very discreetly silent about the living members of his sect, has laboured strenuously to incorporate into it some great names from the dead, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Varro, Cato the elder, and Cicero; with what success my former Remarks have sufficiently shewn; where the reader, as he is variously affected, now with our writer's ignorance, now with his prevarication, is tossed between the alternate passions of pity and contempt.

We now again overtake him, endeavouring to draw over to his honourable party *the very picture of virtue*,* Cato the younger; not from Cato's own declaration, but from a famous passage of the poet Lucan, who, he says, *has raised a noble monument, not only to Cato's wisdom and virtue, but to his* FREE-THINKING;[q] and he *expects our thanks* for giving us that passage, not in the original only, but in the translation of an *ingenious author*.† And here I find myself under some difficulty and uneasiness; our writer slinks away, and leaves me to engage with a nameless *author*, whose character and station at home, a foreigner, and at such a distance from Britain, cannot be supposed to know:

——— ἐπειὴ μάλα πολλὰ μεταξὺ
Οὔρεά τε σκιόεντα, θάλασσά τε ἠχήεσσα.‡

So that I must throw out censures at random, not knowing on whom they fall. Perhaps he may be a person of worth,

[* *Discourse*, p. 141, where Collins cites, "Homo virtuti simillimus," &c. Vell. Paterc. l. ii. c. 35.—D.]

[q Pag. 141.

[† The later 8vo ed. of the *Discourse*, ibid., and the 12mo ed. p. 117 (see note, p. 291), have "in the *excellent* translation of a *most* ingenious author."—The version of Lucan, with which, writing in the character of Phil. Lip., Bentley affects to be unacquainted (see notes, p. 349 and p. 425), is the well-known one of Rowe, who died (1718) long before this portion of the *Remarks* appeared. In the French translation of the *Discourse* the Lucan of Brebeuf is cited.—D.]

[‡ Hom. *Il.* i. 156.—D.]

as little allied to this *free-thinker's* society as many others of the English nation whom he has the impudence to list in it, Hooker, Chillingworth, Wilkins, Cudworth, Tillotson. If so, I must plead in my behalf both the innocence of my intention, and the necessity of the work, because justice cannot be done to the present subject without some severity upon that *version*. But it's possible that the *ingenious translator* may be our writer himself, who would try his faculty in poetry under this mask and disguise; and in that view I desire that all the infamy of that faulty translation may fall on him and no other; since, be he the author or not, he is certainly to answer for it, having so applauded the performance, and so warped it to a vile and impious abuse.

But, before we come to Lucan, we have a small specimen of our writer's usual penetration and ability in the *classics*. Paterculus,* in a fine character of our Cato, among other expressions says, *He was, per omnia ingenio diis quam hominibus propior, in his whole temper* (tranquillity, constancy, justice, &c.) *nearer to the gods than to men*. Who does not know that *ingenium* is *temper*, disposition, turn of mind? But our writer has rendered it, that *in every thing by his* KNOWLEDGE *he approached more to the gods than to men*.[r] Absurdly translated! not only against common language, but common sense. For wherein was Cato so distinguished for *knowledge?* and *universal* too, *per omnia?* As a Stoic he was inferior in *that knowledge* to the Greek professors of the sect who were his preceptors; and for *general knowledge*, what vast extent could he attain to, whose life was short of fifty years, in a continued course of employments, and hurry of public business? he was so far in that regard from *approaching the gods*, that he was below many mortals his contemporaries, Cicero, Nigidius Figulus, Varro, and

[* Lib. ii. c. 35.—D.]

[r] Pag. 141. [The 12mo ed. of the *Discourse* (see note, p. 291) has "by his *wisdom* approaching," &c. p. 117: and the French translation "par *la sagesse de ses actions il ressembloit* plus," &c. p. 207.—D.]

others. But let Cato be *divine* both in temper and knowledge too; our writer himself is certainly *in knowledge* no more than *human*, and *in temper* it's well if so much.

Surely so awkward, so perverse a turn was never given to poet, as this writer and translator (if they are two) have given to Lucan; who, on occasion of Cato's march through the deserts of Afric, near the Temple of Ammon, introduces an officer of his army requesting him, in a set speech, to consult that celebrated oracle; and Cato refusing it, in as set a reply. This refusal our writer takes as a proof of Cato's *free-thinking*; that he took oracles for impostures, for the knavery of *juggling priests*, and the credulity of *superstitious crowds*. But to his great shame and disappointment, the scene in the original has quite contrary actors: there were really some *free-thinkers*, Epicureans, in Cato's retinue, that had a mind to try to puzzle, to baffle the oracle; but Cato, by his very sect a friend to all oracles, in an artful as well as magnanimous speech eludes their inquiry, denies to consult, and so screens and protects the reputation of the temple. So that Cato here is really the patron of superstition; and the supposed *monument of his free-thinking* is a true and lasting monument of our writer's stupidity. But this cannot fully appear without the reader's patience in going along with me through the whole passage in the original, and through the double length of the tedious *translation*.

[1]

——— comitesque Catonem
Orant, exploret Libycum memorata per orbem
Numina, de fama tam longi judicet ævi.[s]

His host, (as crowds are superstitious still,)
Curious of fate, of future good and ill,
And fond to prove prophetic Ammon's skill,

[s] Lucan, lib. ix. vers. 546.

Entreat their leader to the gods would go,*
And from this oracle Rome's fortune know.[t]

Two verses, you see, and a half in the Latin are exactly doubled and become five in the English; which we might take for just payment and exchange, in the known allowance of *one for sense, and one for rhyme,* were it not that no tittle of the original *sense* appears in the version. The poet himself tells us, *that Cato's companions entreat him to* EXPLORE (*try, sift*) *the deity so famous through the Libyan world, and to* JUDGE *of a reputation possessed through so many ages.* Here, indeed, are plain footsteps of *free-thinking,* a doubting about the oracle's veracity; a *trial* demanded and a *judgment,* not of an upstart puny oracle, but (in the heathen account) much older than Solomon's Temple, and adored by the third part of mankind. Now, why are these just and proper sentiments dropt in the version? not a word there of *exploring;* nothing of the wide *authority,* the vast *antiquity* of the oracle; but empty trash with false *ideas* foisted in their place. These inquirers do not desire *to know* Rome's *fortune,* but to criticise the oracle itself, as Crœsus did that at Delphi, and Lucian that in Paphlagonia.† Nay, allowing that they secretly wished *to know their fortunes,* yet it was injudicious in the translator to anticipate here what he knew was to come anon in Labienus's speech. But I desire not to be too severe; I'll admit the propriety of that diction, *curious of future good and ill;* nor shall it be tautology to onerate three poor lines with *prophetic Ammon,* then *the gods,* and then *this oracle;* when in

[* In the complete translation of Lucan by Rowe, published after his death, we find "the *god*," and in the next line "*his* oracle;" but (with the exception of "fortunes" instead of "fortune") the passage stands as above given, in the vith vol. of what is called *Dryden's Miscellanies,* where Rowe's version of the 9th book of Lucan was originally printed.—D.]

[t] Pag. 141.

[† Ar. de La Chapelle (*La Frip. Laïque,* p. 555) refers to *Alexander, seu Pseudomantis:* see Luciani *Opp.* t. ii. p. 217. ed. Hemst.—D.]

truth it's but one god and but once. But I am astonished that any person could presume to translate Lucan who was capable of mistaking *comites* for *an host*, or a whole army. *Comites* or *cohors amicorum* were persons of quality, commonly youths, recommended by their parents or friends to the familiarity of the general, to diet and lodge with him through the course of his expedition, to learn from his conversation the skill and discipline of war. You can scarce dip in any Roman historian, or even poet, but this you are taught there. I'll but quote one place of Florus,[u] because it relates to our Cato, who, *in his apartment after supper*,[v] postquam filium COMITESque ab amplexu dimisit, *when he had embraced and dismissed his son and* companions, *read Plato's treatise of the soul's immortality, and then fell asleep.* These *comites, companions* at Utica in Cato's last hours, are the very same that here speak to him about the oracle of Ammon. If the whole army is meant in one place, it must be meant too in the other. But can our writer imagine that Cato entertained the *whole* army in one room? and embraced them *all* at parting? How unfortunate, then, is his very first line!

His host, *as crowds are superstitious still.*

Sad omen for our translator! and no *superstition* to think so. This mighty *host* and these *crowds* are only a few young noblemen; and so far from *superstition* (as he here calumniates 'em), that he may henceforth value them as hopeful *free-thinkers.* And why that spiteful character given to *all crowds?* mere fillings of his own, without warrant from his original. It carries in it an air of libertinism; and its just and immediate punishment was blunder.

[2]

Maximus hortator scrutandi voce deorum
Eventus Labienus erat: sors obtulit, inquit,

[u] L. Florus, iv. 2.

[v] Plutarch in Catone: Συνεδείπνουν πάντες οἱ ΕΤΑΙΡΟΙ (*comites*). [*Opp.* t. iv. p. 485. ed. Reisk.—D.]

Et fortuna viæ tam magni numinis ora
Consiliumque dei: tanto duce possumus uti
Per Syrtes, bellique datos cognoscere casus.

But Labienus chief the thought approv'd,
And thus the common suit to Cato mov'd:
Chance and the fortune of the way, he said,
Have brought Jove's sacred counsels to our aid.
This greatest of the gods, this mighty chief,
In each distress shall be a sure relief;
Shall point the distant dangers from afar,
And teach the future fortunes of the war.

The Latin poet has observed a decent economy in the conduct of this passage: the young *sceptics* in the former paragraph are despatched in two lines; their request is not put in form; and Cato's refusal is not expressed, but understood; as if given without words, by a look. But now here comes a person of another character, Titus Labienus, lieutenant-general under Cæsar thrqugh all the Gallic wars;* then a deserter to Pompey; in Afric here with Cato; with Pompey the son in Spain, where he perished at the battle of Munda. He (as his speech demonstrates) proceeds upon a different principle; not of waggery and scepticism, but full assurance in the oracle. He was *paullo infirmior*, prone to bigotry and superstition, and for that reason (if it is not true in fact) was judiciously chosen by the poet to be the author of this speech. This character, which I have given of him, though in Lucan's time well known, is now only to be learned from a passage of Plutarch;[w] where *Λαβιηνοῦ*, says he, *μαντείαις τισὶν ἰσχυριζομένου, Labienus relying on some* PROPHECIES, *and affirming that Pompey must be conqueror; Ay*, says Cicero, *and while we trust to that stratagem, we have lost our*

[* wars; 1*st ed.* "war."—D.]

[w] Plut. in Cicer. p. 1612. where for *παραγενέσθαι Πομπήϊον* read *περιγενέσθαι*. [= *Opp.* t. iv. p. 822. ed. Reisk. (who gives *περιγενέσθαι* from two MSS.): *Λαβιηνοῦ δὲ μαντείαις τισὶν ἰσχυριζομένου, καὶ λέγοντος, ὡς δεῖ περιγενέσθαι Πομπήϊον· οὐκοῦν, ἔφη, στρατηγήματι τουτῷ χρώμενοι νῦν ἀποβεβλήκαμεν τὸ στρατόπεδον.*—D.]

very camp. This short occasional hint discovers Labienus's weak side: he had lived to see those prophecies fail, and now wanted new ones from an oracle of the highest fame: if they proved favourable to the cause, that he might persevere with more courage; if otherwise, provide for his own safety. And how dexterously this is evaded by Cato we shall see in the sequel.

One would think these five verses were so plain and easy, that no translator could miss the sense of them, as our's has* done. For what may pass plausibly as an English original grows scandalous when fathered upon Lucan; scarce a line here but either clashes with the poet's design, or with the notions of that age. 'Tis false that *Labienus moved the common suit:* the former suit was but moved by a few, and his was different and his own. But the whole *host,* says the translator, first *entreated* Cato, and then Labienus stepped in as their common spokesman. Where's the *decorum* of this? Where's the rule of military discipline? The very maniples, forsooth, are to break ranks without orders, and surround their general, to demand a public prophecy; which if cross or but dubiously threatening would make them all deserters. No, no; both the *comites* before, and Labienus now, make the motion privately; and neither question nor answer, if the request had succeeded, was to be heard by the common soldier.

Lucan is content to say of Jupiter Ammon *tam magnum numen, so great a deity;* that is, compared with other oracles, the chief whereof were those of Apollo. But the translator soars above him,

This greatest of the gods, this mighty chief:

which, by the way, is a most splendid variation. Now, a Roman would never have said that Jupiter Ammon was as great as Jupiter Capitolinus; though the translator took it for granted that all Jupiters must needs be the same. But a known place in Suetonius may correct his notion of the heathen theology. *Augustus had built a temple to Jupiter*

[* has; *so* 1*st ed.*: *ed.* 1743 "had."—D.]

Tonans within the area of the Capitol; whereupon he had a dream, that Capitolinus Jupiter complained his worshippers were drawn away: Augustus in his dream answered, that he had dedicated Tonans there only as the other's porter; and accordingly when he waked, he hung* (as a porter's badge) *that temple round with bells.*[x] Now, if Capitolinus would not bear the very Thunderer by him but in quality of his porter, much less would he have suffered poor beggarly[y] Ammon (for all he was his namesake) to be styled the *mighty chief.*

All that Labienus expected here from the oracle was *consilium dei, the god's advice* how to pass the Libyan desert, and to foreknow the destiny of the present war; an event thought near at hand; for Cæsar, they well knew, was no loiterer in action. But how does the translator manage this? *This greatest of the gods,* says he,

> *In each distress shall be a sure relief;*
> *Shall point the distant dangers from afar.*

Are not time, circumstance, and popular notion rarely observed here? The dangers, apprehended as just at their heels, are become *distant* and *afar* off; and the oracle is not only to predict, but to prevent the decrees of fate, *a sure relief in all distresses.* Contradiction in the very terms; for if fate could be *prevented,* it could not be *predicted.*

There's a small error here, both in the printed copies and in all the manuscripts that I have seen;

> ——— SORS *obtulit, inquit,*
> *Et fortuna viæ tam magni numinis ora.*

The poet wrote it FORS *obtulit.*† So Horace, *Nulla etenim tibi me* fors obtulit;‡ and again, *Seu ratio dederit, seu* fors objecerit:§ so Tacitus, *et, quæ* fors obtulerat, *navalibus telis*

[* *Jupiter;* 1st ed. "*Jove.*"—D.]

[x] Suet. Aug. c. 91.

[y] Pauper adhuc deus est. *Lucan.* [ix. 519.—D.]

[† In the Strawberry Hill ed. of Lucan we find "sors," and without any note: but only the first three books of that ed. were left fully prepared for the press by Bentley.—D.]

[‡ *Sat.* i. vi. 54.—D.] [§ *Sat.* i. i. 2.—D.]

conficitur; and again, *passim trucidatis, ut quemque* fors obtulerat:[z] in all which places the MSS. of inferior note have turned *fors* into *sors;* whose significations are very different. *Fors* is pure *chance;* but *sors* has in it an idea of *destiny,* of *appointment,* and *allotment. Fors et fortuna viæ, chance and the opportunity of the march.* Now, as we do not expect any exactness from our writer, we do not reproach him, that he has put *sors* in his Latin text; though in his version (if it be his) he has varied from his original,

CHANCE *and the fortune of the way,* he said.

He has jumped, you see, upon the true interpretation; and though he writes *sors,* expresses the meaning of *fors.* I suppose they were both alike to him; and it was true *chance* that he hit the right: he saw the sense was *there or thereabouts;* which is accurate enough for a modern translator.

[3]

Nam cui crediderim superos arcana daturos,
Dicturosque magis quam sancto vera Catoni?
Certe vita tibi semper directa supremas [supernas]
Ad leges, sequerisque deum. ——

To thee, O Cato, pious, wise, and just,
Their dark decrees the cautious gods shall trust:
To thee their fore-determin'd will shall tell:
Their will has been thy law, and thou hast kept it well.

Labienus, already deceived by fallacious predictions, confides in Cato's known sanctity, that he at least would obtain true ones; for surely the gods would *reveal secrets,* and *speak truth* to Cato, who had always lived in conformity to them and their sovereign laws. This, one would think, is easy enough; but no ground can be so plain which our translator cannot stumble on. *Sanctus,* the sole epithet in the Latin, denotes nothing but *purity and holiness of life:* this by the translator is split into three, *pious, wise, and just.* Let him take his *wise* back again, and not introduce epithets im-

[z] Tac. Annal. xiv. 5. Hist. iv. 1.

proper to the occasion. It was not Cato's *wisdom*, nor (as blundered before) his *knowledge*, but his innocence and purity, that might merit the gods' favour. And why instead of plain *superos* have we *cautious gods?* an idea including *fear*, and inconsistent with the nature of the deity. He seems to choose epithets, not for their sense, but for their syllables; *wise Cato, cautious gods*, both of his own manufacture, both incongruous to their places, both repugnant to each other; for if the gods were so very *cautious*, they would be the more shy, not the more communicative, in apprehension of Cato's *wisdom*. But he has made amends in the two last lines:

To thee their fore-determin'd will shall tell:
Their will has been thy law, and thou hast kept it well.

Where, though either of them might pass single and apart, yet sad consequence ensues when they are thus in conjunction. For the *fore-determined will* here is *fate;* not any thing of moral direction or precept, but of physical event; as the issue of this war, &c. And then *their will* in the following line must bear the same sense. So that this *will of the gods*, the course of natural events, was the *law that Cato had kept so well*. Nonsense complete! but if this bears upon him too hard, indulge him a little, and take *their will* and *fore-determined will* both in a moral meaning; for of one meaning both must be. And then the result is this: that as Cato is now to learn the divine *will* by revelation, so formerly he made *that will his law*, not by rules of virtue and natural light, but by the like revelation. So that Cato, through the whole course of his life, is represented like Nicias the Athenian, or Julian the Apostate, to be a seeker to oracles; and yet this whole passage is brought to prove his scorn and contempt of them.

[4]

——— datur, ecce, loquendi
Cum Jove libertas: inquire in fata nefandi
Cæsaris, et patriæ venturos excute mores.

Fate bids thee now the noble thought improve,
Fate brings thee here to meet and talk with Jove.
Inquire betimes what various chance shall come
To impious Cæsar and thy native Rome;
Try to avert at least thy country's doom.

I cannot read this translation but I think I see poor Lucan travestied; not apparelled in his Roman *toga*, but under the cruel shears of an English tailor. The poet says *libertas datur, there's leave, liberty, opportunity of speaking with Jove;* but the translator will needs have it, that FATE *bids him improve,* and FATE *brings him to talk with Jove.* Now I should think, if *fate* had intermeddled here, that Labienus might have spared his speech; for Cato must needs have consulted the oracle without his entreaty: and yet, which is very strange, *in spite of fate* and entreaties too, he passes on and neglects it. But no wonder that this same *fate* was weaker than ordinary, for but ten lines ago it was nothing but *chance;*

Chance *and the fortune of the way, he said,*
Have brought Jove's sacred counsels to our aid.

Here we see *it is chance brings Jove to talk with Cato;* but whip, in the very next breath *it is fate brings Cato to talk with Jove.* Do not laugh at this; for *chance* and *fate,* though the most contrary ideas, being equally monosyllables, are equivalent in our translator's verses. For so immediately in the very next line;

—— Inquire in FATA nefandi
Cæsaris:
Inquire betimes what various CHANCE *shall come*
To impious Cæsar.

Who could possibly have substituted *chance* for *fate* here? unless he thought his verses were to sell by the foot, no matter for the stuff, whether linsey or woolsey. For is it not, as he has made it, a merry errand for *fate* to send Cato on? *Fate* bids him go to the oracle, to inquire there about

future *chance*. Now, for common sense sake, let them agree to change places, that *chance* may give him the opportunity to inquire about future *fate*. For a prediction about *future chance*, would Ammon answer, is impossible: it would seem to him to imply a contradiction, unless he was notably read in the subtilties of metaphysics.

I had like to have forgot to ask one favour of our translator, what that *noble thought* was that Cato was so big with?

Fate bids thee now the noble thought improve.

I inquired of Lucan himself, and he knows nothing of the matter; nor is there in the version the least hint of it either before or after. I conceive it proved addle in the incubation, and never arrived at maturity.

Well! but who can deny that in the last couplet he has improved his original?

—— et patriæ venturos excute mores.

Inquire betimes about thy native Rome;
Try to avert at least thy country's doom.

Labienus, who at least talks good sense in his way, requests here no more of Cato than to ask about Cæsar's fate, and the future condition of the Roman state, whether they were to have a legal or arbitrary government, a republic or a monarchy. This is the meaning of *excute, sift out*, by way of inquiry; as both common language testifies, and the following lines demonstrate. But our sagacious interpreter renders *excute* to *shake off*, to *avert the doom*. Now why, in the name of *fate*, does he thus banter his female readers? If it's *fate*, if it's *doom*, how can it be *averted?* If Cato *tries* to do that, I'll concern myself no more about him. Let him stand for me in our writer's list, for he's fool enough to make a *free-thinker*. *Avert the doom!* in modern rhyme, perhaps, it may be done; but in good old Latin it's impossible:

*Desine fata deûm flecti sperare precando.**

[* Virg. *Æn.* vi. 376.—D.]

But why, with submission, so very hasty, even allowing he *might avert it?* The oracle was not yet consulted: it was yet an even wager, that the expected doom might be prosperous; as likely for the laws and liberties of Rome, as for arbitrary power. No matter for that; our translator beforehand orders him *to try to avert* the prophecy, though it should prove in his favour.

[5]

Jure suo populis uti legumque licebit,
An bellum civile perit? tua pectora sacra
Voce reple: duræ saltem virtutis amator
Quære, quid est virtus? et posce exemplar honesti.

Ask if these arms our freedom shall restore,
Or else if laws and rights [right] shall be no more.
Be thy great breast with sacred knowledge fraught,
To lead us in the wandering maze of thought.
Thou that to virtue ever wert inclin'd,
Learn what it is, how certainly defin'd,
And leave some perfect rule to guide mankind.

Here his version is so loose, so rambling, that one may fairly doubt whether he understood one sentence; to be sure, not all. *Ask*, says Labienus, *whether our people shall enjoy their laws and liberties; or is the civil war lost,* has so much blood been shed *in vain* for the defence of them? This quaint expression was beloved by Lucan and his uncle Seneca: so lib. vi. v. 134.

——— *qui vulnera ferrent,*
Jam deerant; nimbusque ferens tot tela peribat.

So again the verb active, *perdere,* ii. 442.

Atque ipsum non perdat *iter* ———

iii. 706.

——— *non* perdere *letum*
Maxima cura fuit.

But so far is our version from preserving (as a good one

ought) this Lucanism, this characterism of an author, that it inverts the thought. *Shall the liberties be restored, or the war be lost?* says Lucan: *Shall the liberties be lost, or the war restore them?* says the translator. A shrewd sign that this period was gloomy and dark to him. But why so severe, may somebody say, when nothing here is lost, but only inverted? Well then, agreed to pardon him. Misplacing indeed is not losing; for nothing was lost to honest Claudius when his nephew Caligula ordered his *shoes* to be put on his *hands*.*

Tua pectora sacra Voce *reple*, says Labienus; *fill your breast with the sacred voice* of the god, the answer that the oracle is to give you. This surely is very clear; and yet our translator, I fear, took *voice*, not for that of the god, but of Cato himself: *fill your breast with your sacred voice* to give us instruction. If I mistake, let somebody else explain this† distich;

Be thy great breast with sacred knowledge fraught,
To lead us in the wandering maze of thought.

A *wandering maze* indeed! for Lucan himself is quite lost in it. Let any man try, I say, to extricate this better than I have done: but if he's once *led into the maze*, I'll not undertake to lead him out of it.

The close of the speech is this;

—— *duræ saltem virtutis amator*
Quære, quid est virtus? et posce exemplar honesti.

If you will not, says he, consult about the event of the war, as I wish you would, *at least* consult about the affairs of your sect: *you who are a Stoic, an admirer of rigid virtue, ask the oracle what is virtue; and demand to see the living face of honesty.* The turn, you see, of this period entirely depends on *saltem, at least:* without that there's no just transition.

[* Ar. de La Chapelle (*La Frip. Laïque*, p. 576) cites "Sueton. in *Claud.* cap. 8. *Solebant et manibus stertentis socci induci, ut repente expergefactus faciem sibi confricaret.*"—D.]

[† explain this; 1*st ed.* "explain me this."—D.]

And yet some of the editions, and most of the manuscripts, having *semper* instead of *saltem*, our lucky interpreter fell upon that;

Thou that to virtue EVER *wert inclin'd:*

which in this form is flat and insipid; a compliment idly repeated; for more than this he had said above: and besides, it betrays the reader into* a mistake. He must think from your English, that Labienus asks Cato to inquire about the success of the war, and about virtue too: whereas the first is his main request; and if that fails, he compounds for the latter.

Exemplar honesti, an expression fetched from the heights of philosophy, was above our translator's level: so that we'll neither wonder nor be displeased, that he has so miserably rendered it;

And leave some perfect rule to guide mankind.

Admirable indeed: if *posce exemplar honesti* can be racked or bribed to signify *write a book of morals*. *Exemplar, forma, facies, species, effigies*, are words applied by philosophers to *wisdom, virtue, honesty*, when they do προσωποποιεῖν, speak of them as *persons*. FORMAM *quidem ipsam*, says Cicero, . . . *et tanquam* FACIEM HONESTI *vides, quæ si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores* (*ut ait Plato*) *excitaret*:[a] and again, *Habes undique expletam et perfectam . .* FORMAM HONESTATIS:[b] and again, *Consectaturque nullam eminentem* EFFIGIEM VIRTUTIS, *sed adumbratam imaginem gloriæ*:[c] and lastly, *Sed nos veri juris germanæque* JUSTITIÆ *solidam et expressam* EFFIGIEM *nullam tenemus; umbra et imaginibus utimur*.[d] Plato, we see, the great master of metaphorical style, was the first that made use of this figure: *that if men could have* ἐναργὲς εἴδωλον, *the person of wisdom conspicuous before them, they would be in raptures with her beauty*.[e] And from him it was borrowed by the orators, and transferred to *eloquence*:

[* into; 1*st ed.* "to."—D.]

[a] Cic. Offic. i. 5.
[b] De Fin. ii. 15.
[c] Tusc. iii. 2.
[d] Off. iii. 17.
[e] Plato in Phædro.

Præceptor . . optimus . . et electissimus, qui FACIEM *eloquentiæ, non imaginem præstaret:*[f] and by Lucan in another place to military *fortitude;*[g]

Ac velut inclusum perfosso in pectore numen,
Et vivam magnæ SPECIEM VIRTUTIS *adorant:*

but in this passage before us he treads exactly in Plato's steps, *exemplar honesti:* ask, says he, that Ammon would shew you that glorious *visage* τοῦ καλοῦ, of *virtue, honesty, pulchritude* (for the English idea of *honesty* does not reach to *honestum*); a demand worthy of a god and Cato; since without the divine aid mortal eyes could not behold it. 'Tis certain, from his very sect, that our *free-thinker* has never seen it; and our translator's eyes are so weak, that he could not see even Lucan's draught of it, though he held it in his hands.

[6]

Ille deo plenus, tacita quem mente gerebat,
Effudit dignas adytis e pectore voces.

Full of the god that dwelt within his breast,
The hero thus his secret mind express'd,
And inborn truths reveal'd; truths which might well
Become even oracles themselves to tell.

Labienus has now ended his speech, and we are coming to Cato's answer; the transition to which in Lucan is modest as well as grand: *he,* says he, *full of the god, who dwelt in his silent breast, makes a reply even worthy of an oracle.* The poet himself, we know, was a Stoic; and Cato his hero was in the opinion of that age *perfectus Stoicus, perfectus sapiens, a finished wise man* in the full character of the sect;[h] and therefore he had ἔνδον ἐν τῷ στήθει ἱδρυμένον δαίμονα, *a god placed and abiding within his breast,*[i] which in reality was no other than νοῦς καὶ λόγος, *his own mind and reason.*[j]

[f] Dial. de Oratoribus, c. 34.
[g] Lucan, vi. 254.
[h] Cic. in Paradox. Seneca Constan. vii.
[i] Marc. Anton. iii. 16. et passim.
[j] Idem, v. 27.

But besides this philosophic sense, there's an allusion to prophetic rapture; for Virgil, in some poem now lost, had said of an inspired prophetess, *plena deo, full of the god*:[k] an expression so much commended then, that it grew to be a word of fashion. Ovid borrowed it in his tragedy *Medea;*

Feror huc illuc, ut plena deo.

But Gallio, Lucan's great uncle, had it always in his mouth, even to a solecism, *Et ille est plena deo,* when he commended any orator for his spirit and fire. In both these senses our Cato here was *deo plenus;* in the former as *Stoicus sapiens,* in the latter as going to pour forth *dignas adytis voces, words worthy of inspiration.* But then the epithet *tacita mente* comes pat and seasonable; he *bore the god in his silent and sedate mind;* whereas the prophets, when possessed by the god, were ranting and raving under a temporary distraction;

—— non vultus, non color unus,
Non comtæ mansere comæ: sed pectus anhelum,
*Et rabie fera corda tument.**

In the whole, I think there cannot be two finer lines, more full of serene majesty, than these of Lucan.

But our translator, while he labours to swell the thought, or at least to swell his verse, inserts such improper, such foreign stuff into it, that he subverts the whole sentence;

The hero thus his secret *mind express'd,*
And inborn *truths reveal'd.*

Why *secret mind?* when all he says in the following answer are the common *dogmata,* the *maxims* of the sect. What *inborn truths?* when all he delivers were taught him by his preceptors, and had been handed down for two centuries, ever since Zeno. And see how the syntax is distorted; *tacita mente, secret mind,* thrown into the latter verse, to the confusion of all grammar: which has *revealed* to us another *secret,* the *true* size of the translator's learning.

[k] Seneca Suas. iii.

[* Virg. *Æn.* vi. 47.—D.]

[7]

Quid quæri, Labiene, jubes? an liber in armis
Occubuisse velim potius, quam regna videre?
An sit vita nihil, sed longam differat ætas?

Where would thy fond, thy vain inquiry go?
What mystic fate, what secret wouldst thou know?
Is it a doubt, if death should be my doom,
Rather than live till kings and bondage come,
Rather than see a tyrant crown'd in Rome?
Or wouldst thou know, if, what we value here,
Life, be a trifle hardly worth our care?
What by old age and length of days we gain,
More than to lengthen out the sense of pain?

We come at last to Cato's answer, which, if you'll take our writer's word for it, denominates him a *free-thinker*. It is time for us then to look sharp, to observe every period; the battle advances and grows hot; *nunc specimen specitur, nunc certamen cernitur.** And I'll renounce my name PHILELEUTHERUS, if the success of the day does not so frustrate his hopes, that he'll hate both Cato and Lucan for't, as long as he lives.

[* Plaut. *Cas.* iii. 1. 2.—D.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

LEST the reader should perhaps wonder why this Third Part, after so long an interval, is published thus imperfect, it is thought proper to inform him, that Dr. BENTLEY began it many years ago, at the desire of her late Majesty when princess, had actually printed two half-sheets of it, and intended to have finished the whole. But a dispute then unhappily arising about his fees as professor,* in which he thought himself extremely ill used, he threw the book by with indignation; nor could he, after having excused himself to her royal highness, be ever prevailed upon to resume it again. These two half-sheets, however, still remaining with the printer, the publisher of the last edition, in 1737, got leave of Dr. BENTLEY to reprint them at the end; which is the reason why that edition breaks off so abruptly, *master*† being the catch-word to the next intended half-sheet. It was imagined by some, that the remaining part of the copy would be found after Dr. BENTLEY's death; but he having often told me that he wrote it only sheet by sheet, just as they could print it off, I had, I must own, no great expectations. I examined his papers, however, very carefully, and found at length a few pages more, which are now first added

[* *i. e.* Regius Professor of Divinity: for the particulars of this dispute, which took place in 1717, see Monk's *Life of B.* vol. ii. p. 37 sqq.

To the request contained in the following University grace, voted 1715, Bentley had turned a deaf ear: "Whereas the Reverend Dr. Bentley, Master of Trinity College, besides his other labours published from our press, to the great advancement of learning and honour of this University, has lately, under the borrowed name of Phileleutherus Lipsiensis, done eminent service to the Christian religion and the clergy of England, by refuting the objections and exposing the ignorance of an impious set of writers that call themselves Freethinkers—May it please you that the said Dr. Bentley, for his good services already done, have the public thanks of the University; and be desired by Mr. Vice-Chancellor, in the name of the whole body, to finish what remains of so useful a work." Monk's *Life of B.* vol. i. p. 373.—D.]

[† See p. 469. l. 5. from foot.—D.]

in this edition. And as the manuscript ends, agreeably to his former declarations, in the middle of a page, I think I may venture to assure the public, that this is the whole of it that Dr. BENTLEY ever wrote.

R. B.*

Mar. 25, 1748.

[* *i. e.* Richard Bentley, the nephew and sole executor of the author.—D.]

DR. BENTLEY'S

PROPOSALS

FOR PRINTING A NEW EDITION OF THE

GREEK TESTAMENT

AND

ST. HIEROM'S LATIN VERSION.

WITH A

FULL ANSWER TO ALL THE REMARKS OF A LATE PAMPHLETEER.

BY A

MEMBER OF TRINITY COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE.

Cunarum labor est angues superare meorum. Ovid.

Tollentemque minas et sibila colla tumentem
Dejice ———— Virgil.

(From ed. 4to, 1721.)

[Bentley's intention of editing the Greek Testament, (an undertaking which he had for some time meditated, and which had been publicly suggested to him by Hare; see note, p. 356,) was thus announced in a letter to Archbishop Wake:*—

"May it please your Grace;

"'Tis not only your Grace's station and general character, but the particular knowledge I have of you, which encourages me to give you a long letter about those unfashionable topics, religion and learning. Your Grace knows, as well as any, what an alarm has been made of late years with the vast heap of various lections found in MSS. of the Greek Testament. The Papists have made a great use of them against the Protestants, and the Atheists against them both. This was one of Collins' topics in his Discourse on Free-thinking, which I took off in my short answer; and I have heard since, from several hands, that that short view I gave of the causes, and necessity, and use of various lections, made several good men more easy in that matter than they were before. But, since that time, I have fallen into a course of studies that led me to peruse many of the oldest MSS. of Gr. Test. and of the Latin too of St. Jerom; of which there are several in England a full 1000 years old. The result of which has been, that I find I am able (what some thought impossible) to give an edition of the Gr. Test. exactly as it was in the best examples at the time of the Council of Nice. So that there shall not be 20 words, nor even particles' difference; and this shall carry its own demonstration in every verse; which I affirm cannot be so done of any other ancient book, Greek or Latin. So that that book, which, by the present management, is thought the most uncertain, shall have a testimony of certainty above all other books whatever; and an end be put at once to all var. lectt. now or hereafter. I'll give your Grace the progress which brought me, by degrees, into the present view and scheme that I have of a new edition.

"Upon some points of curiosity, I collated one or two of St. Paul's epistles with the Alexandrian MS., the oldest and best now in the world. I was surprised to find several transpositions of words, that Mill and the other collators took no notice of; but I soon found their way was to mark nothing but change of words; the collocation and order they entirely neglected: and yet at sight I discerned what a new force and beauty this new order (I found in the MS.) added to the sentence. This encouraged me to collate the whole book over, to a letter, with my own hands.

"There is another MS. at Paris of the same age and character with this; but, meeting with worse usage, it was so decayed by age, that 500 years ago it served the Greeks for old vellum; and they writ over the old brown capitals a book of Ephraim Syrus, but so, that even now, by a good eye and a skilful person, the old writing may be read under the new. One page of this, for a specimen, is printed in a copper cut in Lamie's Harmony of the Evangelists.

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* First printed by Burney in *Rich. Bentleii et Doct. Virorum Epistolæ*, &c. 1807. 4to. p. 228.

"Out of this, by an able hand,* I have had above 200 lections given me from the present printed Greek; and I was surprised to find that almost all agreed, both in word and order, with our noble Alexandrian. Some more experiments in other old copies have discovered the same agreement: so that I dare say, take all the Greek Testaments surviving, (that are not *occidental with Latin*, too like our Beza's at Cambridge) and that are 1000 years old, and they'll so agree together, that of the 30,000 present var. lectt. there are not there found 200.

"The western Latin copies, by variety of translations, without public appointment, and a jumble and heap of all of them, were grown so uncertain, that scarce two copies were alike; which obliged Damasus, then Bishop of Rome, to employ St. Jerom to regulate the best received translation of each part of the New Testament to the original Greek, and so set out a new edition so castigated and corrected. This he declares in his preface he did, *ad Græcam veritatem, ad exemplaria Græca, sed vetera;* and his learning, great name, and just authority, extinguished all the other Latin versions, and has been conveyed down to us, under the name of the Vulgate. 'Twas plain to me, that when that copy came first from that great Father's hands, it must agree exactly with the most authentic Greek exemplars; and if now it could be retrieved, it would be the best test and voucher for the true reading out of several pretending ones. But when I came to try Pope Clement's Vulgate, I soon found the Greek of the Alexandrian and that would by no means pary. This set me to examine the Pope's Latin by some MSS. of 1000 years old; and the success is, that the old Greek copies and the old Latin so exactly agree, (when an able hand discerns the rasures, and the old lections laying under them), that the pleasure and satisfaction it gives me is beyond expression.

"The New Testament has been under a hard fate since the invention of printing.

"After the Complutenses and Erasmus, who had but very ordinary MSS., it has become the property of booksellers. Rob. Stephens' edition, set out and regulated by himself alone, is now become the standard. That text stands, as if an apostle was his compositor.

"No heathen author has had such ill fortune. Terence, Ovid, &c. for the first century after printing, went about with 20,000 errors in them. But when learned men undertook them, and from the oldest MSS. set out correct editions, those errors fell and vanished. But if they had kept to the first published text, and set the var. lections only in the margin, those classic authors would be as clogged with variations as Dr. Mill's Testament is.

"Sixtus and Clemens, at a vast expense, had an assembly of learned divines to recense and adjust the Latin Vulgate, and then enacted their new edition authentic: but I find, though I have not discovered any thing done *dolo malo*, they were quite unequal to the affair. They were mere *theologi*, had no experience in MSS. nor made use of good Greek copies, and followed books of 500 years before those of double that age. Nay, I believe they took these new ones for the older of the two; for it is not every body that knows the age of a MS.

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* Wetstein: see p. 480.

"I am already tedious, and the post is a-going. So that, to conclude—in a word, I find that by taking 2000 errors out of the Pope's Vulgate, and as many out of the Protestant Pope Stephens', I can set out an edition of each in columns, without using any book under 900 years old, that shall so exactly agree, word for word, and, what at first amazed me, order for order, that no two tallies, nor two indentures, can agree better.

"I affirm that these so placed will prove each other to a demonstration; for I alter not a letter of my own head without the authority of these old witnesses. And the beauty of the composition (barbarous, God knows, at present,) is so improved, as makes it more worthy of a revelation, and yet no one text of consequence injured or weakened.

"My Lord, if a casual fire should take either his Majesty's library, or the King's of France, all the world could not do this. As I have, therefore, great impulse, and I hope not ἀθεεὶ, to set about this work immediately, and leave it as a κειμήλιον to posterity against atheists and infidels, I thought it my duty and my honour to first acquaint your Grace with it; and know if the extrinsic expense to do such a work completely (for my labour I reckon nothing) may obtain any encouragement, either from the crown or public.

"I am, with all duty and obedience,

"Your Grace's most humble servant,

"Trin. Coll., April the 15th, 1716. "Ri. Bentley."

From the following letter* it appears that the Archbishop heartily encouraged the design:—

"May it please your Grace; Trin. Coll., Sunday evening.

"This minute I had the honour of your Grace's letter: indeed, when I saw by the prints that your Grace was in full convocation, and had addressed his Majesty upon so just an occasion, and consequently was immersed in business of the highest importance, I condemned myself that I should be so immersed here in books and privacy as not to know a more proper occasion of address to your Grace. On a due consideration of all which, I gave over expecting any answer, and designed to wait on you in person when I came to London, where already my family is. But I see your Grace's goodness and public spirit is superior to all fatigues; and therefore I thank you particularly for this present favour, as what was (justly) above my expectation. The thought of printing the Latin in a column against the Greek (which your Grace puts to the common), I doubt not is your own. My Lord, it is necessary to do so; and without that all my scheme would be nothing. It was the very view that possessed me with this thought, which has now so engaged me, and in a manner enslaved me, that *væ mihi* unless I do it. Nothing but sickness (by the blessing of God) shall hinder me from prosecuting it to the end. I leave the rest to the time of the Westminster election: with my hearty prayers and thanks, being

"Your Grace's most obedient and obliged humble servant,

"Ri. Bentley.

* Id. p. 235.

"I was told, a month ago, that your Grace (when you was at Paris) had made a whole transcript of the Clermont copy, Greek and Latin, which I hope is true."

On this great work, though soon after its commencement his duties at Cambridge, and the strange feuds in which he was involved, occasionally suspended it, Bentley continued to employ himself, regardless of labour or expense. For a detailed account of his progress, I refer the reader to Monk's *Life of B.* vol. ii. p. 118 sqq.: it will be sufficient to mention here that MSS. were collated for him at Paris by Wetstein; and afterwards by John Walker, Fellow of Trinity College, whom he had sent over to the French capital in 1719 for that purpose.

On the return of Walker to England in 1720, Bentley put forth two folio leaves of Proposals, ("drawn up," as he himself tells us, "in haste, in one evening by candle-light, and printed the next day from that first and sole draught"); the first containing an account of the intended edition, the second a specimen of its execution—the last chapter of the Revelation.*

The Proposals soon reached a second edition; and Conyers Middleton (over whom was then hanging a prosecution for his pamphlet† against Bentley's government) lost no time in attacking their weaker points with equal skill and malice in

Remarks, Paragraph by Paragraph, upon the Proposals lately published by Richard Bentley, for a new edition of the Greek Testament and Latin Version.—Doctus criticus et adsuetus urere, secare, inclementer omnis generis libros tractare, apices, syllabas, voces, dictiones confodere, et stilo exigere, continebitne ille ab integro et intaminato Divinæ Sapientiæ monumento crudeles ungues? Petri Burmanni Orat. Lugd. Bat. 1720.—*By a Member of the University of Cambridge.* London, 1721. 4to, pp. 24: of which there was a third edition (with the author's name) during the same year.

This tract was speedily known to be Middleton's, by his own avowal.‡

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* "The reader cannot help seeing through *the shallow artifice* of his taking the *last chapter of the Revelations* for *the specimen of his edition;* to persuade us that *the whole work* is already done, and nothing wanting but the encouragement of *contributions* for the *sending of it to the press.*" Middleton's *Farther Remarks*, &c. p. 69.—But the whole work was really in an equal state of readiness.

† "*A True Account of the Present State of Trinity College in Cambridge, under the Oppressive Government of their Master, Richard Bentley, late D.D.*" *&c.* London, 1720. 8vo, pp. 43.

‡ "But what was the most surprising in this *extraordinary piece* of his was to find it to be in fact a *most virulent* and *malicious libel* upon Dr. Colbatch, a *reverend* and *learned* member of his college, on pretence of his being the *author of the Remarks*, though he could not possibly be ignorant, *long before* his book was published, that this *worthy gentleman* was perfectly unconcerned in the controversy; wholly out of the question; and had not any share or part at all in *advising* or *assisting* me on the occasion. For I no sooner heard that

Bentley, however, suspected that the materials for it had been supplied by Dr. Colbatch, Professor of Casuistry, and one of the Fellows of Trinity, against whom the Master had long been waging war; a suspicion grounded on his knowledge that Colbatch had assisted Middleton with papers for the pamphlet already mentioned against his college government, and on the coincidence of some passages in the *Remarks* with certain expressions used by Colbatch in conversation. Accordingly, in a third* edition of his *Proposals, with a full Answer to all the Remarks of a late Pamphleteer. By a Member of Trinity College.* London, 1721. 4to, pp. 44. (the piece now reprinted), he chose to consider Colbatch as the sole author of the *Remarks*, and assailed him with the coarsest personal abuse. That the *full Answer*, &c. was from Bentley's pen is manifest in every page: the signature at the end, I. E., are the two first vowels in the names *Richard Bentley*.†

Indignant at such libellous invectives, Colbatch immediately endeavoured to obtain redress by every means within his reach: see a minute account of his proceedings in Monk's *Life of B.*, vol. ii. p. 138 sqq. In a note below I insert the paper which Colbatch printed at the time, and the censure which was passed by the heads of colleges on the *full Answer*, &c.‡

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some of my friends were suspected by him, but to prevent any inconvenience which might befal such of them as were more immediately under his power, I freely owned myself the *sole author*, gave commission to my acquaintance to make no secret of it any where; and was informed at different times by several of them that they had assured some of *his principal friends* and *confidants* of the *truth* and *certainty* of it to their own knowledge. Dr. Colbatch, on the other hand, did from the beginning (*as he afterwards thought fit to declare by a printed advertisement*) constantly *disclaim* the imputation in such a *public* and *open manner* as must of necessity come to *the knowledge of our editor*." Preface to Middleton's *Farther Remarks, &c.*

* That this is the *third* ed. of the Proposals I learn from Middleton's *Farther Remarks*, &c. p. 23: of the earlier eds. I have seen only the first folio.

† "I must honestly and frankly tell you, Master, that every body I have yet met with, both friends and foes, affirm you to be that very champion or bully, in masquerade. A person well versed in Porta's Art of Occult Ciphers has proved it by the very letters I. E., the first vowels of *Richard Bentley*." *A Letter to the Reverend Master of Trinity College, &c.*, p. 10.

‡ "Cambridge, Jan. 20.

"Finding myself to be treated after a most barbarous manner in a virulent libel, which bears the title of *Dr. Bentley's Proposals, with a full Answer, &c.*, upon pretence of my being the author of *The Remarks upon the Proposals lately published by Richard Bentley, &c.*, I think it necessary upon several accounts to declare as follows, viz.:

"That I am not the author of those *Remarks*, nor any part of them, and that they were undertaken and written without my assistance or knowledge.

"That R. B. certainly knew, or easily might have known, that they were

Middleton soon after rejoined in a pamphlet, much longer and more elaborate than his first, and entitled

Some Farther Remarks, Paragraph by Paragraph, upon Proposals lately published for A New Edition of A Greek and Latin Testament by Richard Bentley. Containing A full Answer to the Editor's late Defence of his said Proposals, as well as to all his objections there made against my former Remarks.—Imperitiam tuam nemo potest fortius accusare, quam tu ipse dum scribis. Hieron. —— Occupatus ille eruditione secularium literarum scripturas omnino sanctas ignoraverit; et nemo possit, quamvis eloquens, de eo bene disputare, quod nesciat. Ibid.—By Conyers Middleton, D.D. London, 1721. 4to, pp. 74.

It has been generally supposed that Bentley's project was frustrated by the powerful attacks of Middleton; and Wetstein tells us (*Prolegom.* p. 156) that it was abandoned because the Board of Treasury rejected Bentley's application to import duty-free the paper for the work — a supposition and a statement which Dr. Monk has clearly shewn to be erroneous; *Life of B.*, vol. ii. p. 146,

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written by the Reverend and learned Dr. Middleton, who had owned them to several of his friends, by whose means he verily believes that R. B. was informed that he alone was the author. For my own part, presently after the *Remarks* were published, I took all occasions to declare as above, being obliged in justice so to do, lest my silence might in some measure contribute to deprive my worthy friend of the honour due for so excellent a performance; nor do I question but that R. B., before he began to write his libel, had been acquainted with what I said on those occasions.

"That those foul aspersions which are cast upon me in almost every page are as false in fact as they are apparently malicious; which is notorious to all who know me, and to none more than R. B. himself.

"That I never wrote any libels against the government, the College, or the Master, as he falsely asserts.

"I never wrote any thing at all relating to the government, or published any thing concerning the College or the Master, except a commemoration sermon, in Dec. 1717, which the Master pretended to approve of, giving it under his hand that he would subscribe to every word of it. As to other matters relating to either, I have hitherto thought them fit only for the cognizance of a Visitor.

"John Colbatch, D.D., Senior Fellow of Trinity College, and Casuistical Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge."

"Cambridge.

"At a meeting of the Vice-Chancellor and Heads, Feb. 27, 1720-21.

"Whereas the Reverend John Colbatch, D.D. and Casuistical Professor of this University, hath made complaint to us of a book lately published, annexed to *Proposals for Printing a New Edition of the Greek Testament, &c.*, and called *A Full Answer to all the Remarks of a late Pamphleteer, by a Member of Trinity College*, subscribed I. E., wherein the said John Colbatch conceives himself to be highly injured, as being represented under the most reproachful and infa-

sqq. Bentley at intervals continued his labours on the edition as zealously as ever till about the middle of 1729: after that period we cannot discover that he pursued them; the little leisure which perplexing law-suits allowed him was devoted to other literary undertakings; and his troubles only ceased when age had unfitted him for the completion of his grand design.

On his decease in 1742, the money which had been subscribed for the Greek Testament, amounting, it is said, to 2000 guineas, was returned by his nephew Richard, his sole executor; to whom he had bequeathed, with the exception of some Greek manuscripts left to the college, his library and papers; and by whom (see Wetstein's *Proleg.* p. 156) he seems to have expected that at least the far-famed edition would be given to the public. This nephew died in 1786; and, according to his bequest, the whole *apparatus criticus** for the

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mous characters, and hath therefore applied to us for redress: We the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Colleges, whose names are underwritten, having perused the said book, do find that the said Dr. Colbatch hath just ground of complaint, it appearing to us that he is therein described under very odious and ignominious characters, and do declare and pronounce the said book to be a most virulent and scandalous *libel;* highly injurious to the said Dr. Colbatch, contrary to good manners, and a notorious violation of the statutes and discipline of this University. And as soon as the author of the said *libel* can be discovered, we resolve to do justice to the said Dr. Colbatch, by inflicting such censure upon the offender as the statutes of this University in that case do appoint.

"Tho. Crosse, Vice-Chancellor. Bardsey Fisher. Wm. Grigg.
John Covel. Edw. Lany. D. Waterland.
C. Ashton. R. Jenkin. Wm. Savage."

Preface to Middleton's *Farther Remarks*, &c.

* A distinguished member of Trinity College has obligingly furnished me with the following information concerning it:

"These collections are principally composed of thirteen printed copies of the Greek Testament, interlined with Bentley's notes, and with collations of a vast multitude of ancient MSS., copied by Bentley himself, except two or three, the collations of which are in the hand-writing of John James Wetstein. I subjoin a list of these editions:

Argentorati, 1524. 12mo.
Lutetiæ, Roberti Stephani, 1549. 12mo.
Genevæ, cum notis J. Scaligeri, 1620. Small quarto.
Lutetiæ Parisiorum, 1628. Folio. Two copies.
Roterodami, 1654. 12mo.
Oxon. 1675. 12mo. Two copies.
Cantabrigiæ, 1700. 12mo.
Joannis Gregorii, Oxon. 1703. Folio.
Millii, Oxon. 1707. Folio.
Wetsteinii, Amstelædami, 1711. Small 8vo.
Wetsteinii, Amstelædami, 1735. Small 8vo.

Greek Testament, together with some other books and MSS. of Bentley, were deposited in Trinity College.

For farther particulars, besides the excellent work of Dr. Monk, the reader may consult *Thes. Epist. Lacroz.* 1742. t. i. p. 68; Wetstein's remarks, "De Editione proposita Bentleii," in his *Prolegomena* to *Test. Gr.* 1751, p. 153 sqq.; and Krighout's *Memoria Wetsteniana Vindicata*, 1755, p. 34 sqq., Appendix, p. 11 sqq.

As connected with the present subject, the following publications require to be noticed:—

1. *Two Letters to the Reverend Dr. Bentley, Master of Trinity-College in Cambridge, concerning his Intended Edition of the Greek Testament. Together with the Doctor's Answer, and Some Account of what may be Expected from that Edition. With a Particular Enquiry into Two Texts of St. Matth. xix.* 17. *and xxvii.* 9. *And that Famous one of St. John*, 1 *Epist.* v. 7. THERE ARE THREE *that bear Record, &c.* London, 1717. 8vo, pp. 38.

This tract, by an unknown writer, is only valuable because it has preserved the subjoined letter of Bentley:—

"Sir, Trin. Col., Jan. 1, $17\frac{1}{1}\frac{6}{7}$.

"Yours of December the 20th came safely to my hands, wherein you tell me, from common fame, that in my designed edition of the New Testament I purpose to leave out the verse of John's Epistle i. chap. 5. ver. 7.

"About a year ago, reflecting upon some passages of St. Hierom, that he had adjusted and castigated the then Latin Vulgate to the best Greek exemplars, and had kept the very order of the words of the original, I formed a thought *a priori*, that if St. Jerom's true Latin exemplar could now be come at, it would be found to agree exactly with the Greek text of the same age; and so the old copies of each language (if so agreeing) would give mutual proof and even demonstration to each other. Whereupon rejecting the printed editions of each, and the several manuscripts of seven centuries and under, I made use of none but those of a thousand years ago, or above (of which sort I have 20

In several of these editions, especially those of the folio size, the notes of Bentley are extremely copious, and closely written both in the margins and between the lines of the text; and the whole collection is a wonderful monument of his industry, and presents such a vast accumulation of materials, that one may fairly conjecture that his own voluminous annotations were the main obstacle to the execution of his intended edition of the Greek Testament.

"In addition to the printed copies above mentioned, there are also two MSS. of the Epistles of St. Paul of the ninth or tenth century, one of which is of great value;—a copy of 'Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Divina Bibliotheca. Folio. Parisiis, 1693;' the third part of which, containing the Latin translation of the Greek Testament, is replete with Bentley's notes. And a considerable quantity of letters and miscellaneous papers relating to the edition undertaken by him."

now in my study, that one with another make 20,000 years). I had the pleasure to find, as I presaged, that they agreed exactly like two tallies, or two indentures; and I am able from thence to lead men out of the labyrinth of 60,000 various lections (for St. Jerom's Latin has as many varieties as the Greek), and to give the text as it stood in the best copies in the time of the Council of Nice, without the error of 50 words.

"Now in this work I indulge nothing to any conjecture, not even in a letter, but proceed solely upon authority of copies and Fathers of that age. And what will be the event about the said verse of John, I myself know not yet, having not used all the old copies that I have information of.

"But by this you see that in my proposed work the fate of that verse will be a mere *question of fact*. You endeavour to prove (and that's all you aspire to) that it *may* have been writ by the apostle, being consonant to his other doctrine. This I concede to you; and if the fourth century knew that text, let it come in, in God's name: but if that age did not know it, then Arianism, in its height, was beat down without the help of that verse; and let the *fact* prove as it will, the *doctrine* is unshaken.

"Yours,

"Ric. Bentley."

On the 1st of May following, Bentley delivered at Cambridge his probationary lecture as candidate for the Regius Professorship of Divinity, to which he was next day appointed. He chose for his subject the above-mentioned text of St. John, and concluded by decidedly rejecting it. This prælection (which was in Latin) has unfortunately disappeared; but it is mentioned by Porson as "still extant" in his *Letters to Travis*, Pref. p. viii., and had been seen by him, Monk's *Life of B.*, vol. ii. p. 19; and was once in possession of the late Dean Vincent, who had borrowed it, with other papers of Bentley, from a relative of the great scholar: *ibid.* There is reason to believe that an examination of the disputed verse was to have formed part of the *Prolegomena* to Bentley's ed. of the Testament: *id.* ii. p. 287.

2. *A Letter to the Reverend Master of Trinity College in Cambridge, Editor of a New Greek and Latin Testament.*

Tollentemque minas & sibila colla tumentem
Dejice——
Ah Timon, Timon, quæ te dementia cepit?
Ah, quæ te mala mens, miselle Timon?
Tune TUIS *telis moriere!*
Ne sævi, magne sacerdos.
Nihil est, Zoile, quin male EDENDO *possit depravarier.*
Ὃς μὲν ἐπίστατο πολλὰ, κακῶς δ' ἠπίστατο πάντα.
Et si non aliqua nocuisset, mortuus esset.
——— æstuat ingens
Uno in corde odium mixtoque insania fastu,
Et furiis agitatus amor sceleratus habendi.

Answer to the Remarks by I. E., p. 1, 12, 16, 24, 26, 28, 39.

London, 1721. 4to, pp. 23. A second edition appeared during the same year. This clever and ill-natured attack on Bentley is signed "Philalethes."

3. *Epistolæ Duæ ad Celeberrimum Doctissimumque Virum F—— V—— Professorem Amstelodamensem Scriptæ. Quarum in alterâ agitur de Editione Novi Testamenti a Clarissimo Bentleio susceptâ, omnesque ejus, adhuc in lucem emissæ, Conjecturæ de sacro Textu examinantur. In alterâ vero multæ de corruptis (uti videntur) Epistolarum Novi Testamenti locis conjecturæ, jam primum editæ, proponuntur.* Londini, 1721. 4to, pp. 31.

By Zachary Pearce, who writes under the name of *Phileleutherus Londinensis.*

4. *An Enquiry into the Authority of the Primitive Complutensian Edition of the New Testament, as principally founded on the most Ancient Vatican Manuscript; together with some Research after that Manuscript. In order to decide the Dispute about* 1 *John, v.* 7. *In a Letter to the Reverend Mr. Archdeacon Bentley, Master of Trinity-College in Cambridge.* London, 1722. 8vo, pp. 54.

Has been attributed to Dr. Richard Smalbroke. D.]

Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ

GRÆCE.

NOVUM TESTAMENTUM

VERSIONIS VULGATÆ,

PER S^tum^ HIERONYMUM AD VETUSTA EXEMPLARIA GRÆCA CASTIGATÆ ET EXACTÆ.

UTRUMQUE EX ANTIQUISSIMIS CODD. MSS., CUM GRÆCIS TUM LATINIS, EDIDIT

RICHARDUS BENTLEIUS.

PROPOSALS FOR PRINTING.

I. THE author of this edition, observing that the printed copies of the New Testament, both of the original Greek and ancient vulgar Latin, were taken from manuscripts of no great antiquity, such as the first editors could then procure; and that now by God's providence there are MSS. in Europe (accessible, though with great charge) above a thousand years old in both languages; believes he may do good service to common Christianity if he publishes a new edition of the Greek and Latin, not according to the recent and interpolated copies, but as represented in the most ancient and venerable MSS. in Greek and Roman capital letters.

II. The author, revolving in his mind some passages of St. Hierom; where he declares, that (without making a new version) he adjusted and reformed the whole *Latin Vulgate to the best Greek exemplars*, that is, to those of the famous Origen; and another passage, where he says, that a verbal or literal interpretation out of Greek into Latin is not necessary, *except in the Holy Scriptures*, ubi ipse verborum ordo

mysterium est, *where the very order of the words is* mystery*; took thence the hint, that if the oldest copies of the original Greek and Hierom's Latin were examined and compared together, perhaps they would be still found to agree both in words and order of words. And upon making the essay, he has succeeded in his conjecture beyond his expectation or even his hopes.

III. The author believes that he has retrieved (except in very few places) the true exemplar of Origen, which was the standard to the most learned of the *Fathers*, at the time of the Council of Nice and two centuries after. And he is sure that the Greek and Latin MSS., by their mutual assistance, do so settle the original text to the smallest nicety, as cannot be performed now in any *classic* author whatever: and that out of a labyrinth of thirty thousand various readings, that crowd the pages of our present best editions, all put upon equal credit, to the offence of many good persons, this clue so leads and extricates us, that there will scarce be two hundred out of so many thousands that can deserve the least consideration.

IV. To confirm the lections which the author places in the text, he makes use of the old versions, Syriac, Coptic, Gothic, and Æthiopic, and of all the Fathers, Greeks and Latins, within the first five centuries; and he gives in his notes all the various readings (now known) within the said five centuries. So that the reader has under one view what the first ages of the church knew of the text; and what has crept into any copies since is of no value or authority.

V. The author is very sensible, that in the sacred writings there's no place for conjectures or emendations. Diligence and fidelity, with some judgment and experience, are the characters here requisite. He declares, therefore, that he does not alter one letter in the text without the authorities subjoined in the notes. And to leave the free choice to every reader, he places under each column the smallest variations of this edition, either in words or order, from the received

[* *is*; 1st ed. "*is a*."—D.]

Greek of Stephanus, and the Latin of the two popes Sixtus V. and Clemens VIII. So that this edition exhibits both itself and the common ones.

VI. If the author has any thing to suggest towards a change of the text, not supported by any copies now extant, he will offer it separate in his *Prolegomena;* in which will be a large account of the several MSS. here used, and of the other matters which contribute to make this edition useful. In this work he is of no sect or party; his design is to serve the whole Christian name. He draws no consequences in his notes; makes no oblique glances upon any disputed points, old or new. He consecrates this work, as a κειμήλιον, a κτῆμα ἐσαεὶ, a *charter*, a *magna charta*, to the whole Christian church; to last when all the ancient MSS. here quoted may be lost and extinguished.

VII. To publish this work, according to its use and importance, a great expense is requisite: it's designed to be printed, not on the paper or with the letter of this *Specimen*, but with the best letter, paper, and ink that Europe affords. It must therefore be done by subscription or contribution. As it will make two tomes in folio, the lowest subscription for smaller paper must be three guineas, one advanced in present; and for the great paper five guineas, two advanced.

VIII. The work will be put to the press as soon as money is contributed to support the charge of the impression; and no more copies will be printed than are subscribed for. The overseer and corrector of the press will be the learned Mr. JOHN WALKER, of Trinity College in Cambridge; who, with great accurateness, has collated many MSS. at Paris for the present edition. And the issue of it, whether gain or loss, is equally to fall on him and the author.

ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΕΩΣ Κεφ. κβ'.

1 ΚΑΙ ἔδειξέν μοι ποταμὸν ὕδατος ζωῆς, λαμπρὸν ὡς κρύσταλλον, ἐκπορευόμενον ἐκ τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀρνίου.

2 Ἐμμέσῳ τῆς πλατείας αὐτῆς, καὶ τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐκεῖθεν, ξύλον ζωῆς ποιοῦν καρποὺς δώδεκα, κατὰ μῆνα ἕνα ἕκαστον ἀποδιδοῦν τὸν καρπὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὰ φύλλα τοῦ ξύλου εἰς θεραπείαν τῶν ἐθνῶν.

3 Καὶ πᾶν κατάθεμα οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι, καὶ ὁ θρόνος τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀρνίου ἐν αὐτῇ ἔσται, καὶ οἱ δοῦλοι αὐτοῦ λατρεύσουσιν αὐτῷ.

4 Καὶ ὄψονται τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων αὐτῶν.

5 Καὶ νὺξ οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι,

APOCALYPSEOS Cap. XXII.

1 Et ostendit mihi fluvium aquæ vitæ, splendidum tamquam crystallum, procedentem de sede Dei et agni.

2 In medio plateæ ejus, et ex utraque parte fluminis, lignum vitæ adferens fructus duodecim, per menses singulos reddens fructum suum, et folia ligni ad sanitatem gentium.

3 Et omne maledictum non erit amplius, et sedes Dei et agni in illa erit, et servi ejus servient illi.

4 Et videbunt faciem ejus, et nomen ejus in frontibus eorum.

5 Et nox ultra non erit, et

1 *μοι καθαρὸν ποταμὸν.* 2 *ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν.* 3 *πᾶν κατανάθεμα.* 5 *οὐκ ἔσται ἐκεῖ. καὶ χρείαν οὐκ ἔχουσι λύχνου καὶ φωτὸς ἡλίου. φωτίζει αὐτοὺς.*

3 *sed* sedes Dei. in illa *erunt.*

I. Καθαρὸν ποταμὸν] Omittunt* *καθαρὸν* Alex. Codd. Anglici duo, Gallici tres; Vers. Copt. Syr. Æthiop. Hilarius; Codd. Latini omnes. sed Andreas et Arethas *ποταμὸν καθαρὸν.* Gall. unus, *ποταμὸν ὕδατος ζωῆς καθαρὸν.* II. Καὶ ἐντεῦθεν] Alex. Codd. Angl. duo, Gall. quatuor, Germ. unus, Arethas, Syriac.† *καὶ ἐκεῖθεν.* III. Κατάθεμα] Alex. Arethas, Andreas, Codd. plerique omnes, Editio Complut. *κατάθεμα. Sed* sedes Dei] Codd. Lat. plerique omnes, *et* sedes, ut Græci omnes *καὶ. Erunt*] Ita Codd. quos adhuc vidi: legendum *erit*; nam Græci universi *ὁ θρόνος.* V. Νὺξ

[* Omittunt] "Deest;" Speciminis ed. pr.—D.]
[† Syriac.] om. Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

καὶ οὐχ ἕξουσιν χρείαν φωτὸς λύχνου καὶ φωτὸς ἡλίου, ὅτι κύριος ὁ Θεὸς φωτίσει ἐπ' αὐτοὺς, καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.

non egebunt lumine lucernæ neque lumine solis, quoniam dominus Deus inluminabit illos, et regnabunt in sæcula sæculorum.

6 Καὶ εἶπέν μοι, Οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι πιστοὶ καὶ ἀληθινοί· καὶ ὁ κύριος ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν προφητῶν ἀπέστειλεν τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ, δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει.

6 Et dixit mihi, Hæc verba fidelissima et vera sunt: et dominus Deus spirituum prophetarum misit angelum suum, ostendere servis suis quæ oportet fieri cito.

7 Καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔρχομαι ταχύ. μακάριος ὁ τηρῶν τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου.

7 Et ecce venio velociter. beatus qui custodit verba prophetiæ libri hujus.

8 Κἀγὼ Ἰωάννης ὁ ἀκούων καὶ βλέπων ταῦτα. Καὶ ὅτε ἤκουσα καὶ ἔβλεπον, ἔπεσα προσκυνῆσαι πρὸ ποδῶν τοῦ ἀγγέλου τοῦ δεικνύοντός μοι ταῦτα.

8 Et ego Johannes, qui audivi et vidi hæc. Et postquam audissem et vidissem, cecidi ut adorarem ante pedes angeli qui mihi hæc ostendebat.

6 καὶ κύριος, deest ὁ. ὁ Θεὸς τῶν ἁγίων προφητῶν. 7 Ἰδοὺ, deest καὶ. 8 Καὶ ἐγὼ. ὁ βλέπων ταῦτα καὶ ἀκούων. καὶ ἔβλεψα. ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ποδῶν.

6 fidelissima sunt et vera.

οὐκ ἔσται ἐκεῖ] Alex. ἔσται ἔτι. Syr. Latini omnes. In Græcis plerisque deest ἐκεῖ. Χρείαν ἔχουσι λύχνου] Alex. ἔξουσιν χρείαν φωτὸς λύχνου. et sic Andreas et* Gregorius Palamas, et Codd. Latini omnes, Syr. Copt. Æthiop. Φωτὸς ἡλίου] Alex. φῶς ἡλίου. Φωτίζει αὐτούς] Latini plerique *illuminat*. Sed Alex. Greg. Palamas, φωτίσει ἐπ' αὐτούς. VI. Καὶ κύριος] Alex. καὶ ὁ κύριος. Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν ἁγίων προφητῶν] Sic edidit Erasmus. Sed Complut. Alex. Arethas, Græci Codd. fere omnes, Latini omnes, Syr. Copt. Æthiop. τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν προφ. Fidelissima sunt et vera] Codd. veteres, fid. et vera sunt. VII. Ἰδοὺ] Καὶ ἰδοὺ. Alex. Andreas, Arethas, Syrus, Codd. Græci plerique omnes, Latini ad unum omnes. VIII. Καὶ ἐγὼ Ἰω. ὁ βλέπων ταῦτα καὶ ἀκούων] Alex. Andreas, Complut. Syrus, Latinus, Codd. Græci

[* Andreas et] om. Speciminis ed. pr.—D.]

9 Καὶ λέγει μοι, Ὅρα μή. σύνδουλός σου εἰμὶ, καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου τῶν προφητῶν, καὶ τῶν τηρούντων τοὺς λόγους τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου. τῷ Θεῷ προσκύνησον.

10 Καὶ λέγει μοι, Μὴ σφραγίσῃς τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου· ὁ καιρὸς γὰρ ἐγγύς ἐστιν.

11 Ὁ ἀδικῶν ἀδικησάτω ἔτι, καὶ ὁ ῥυπαρὸς ῥυπαρευθήτω ἔτι, καὶ ὁ δίκαιος δικαιοσύνην ποιησάτω ἔτι, καὶ ὁ ἅγιος ἁγιασθήτω ἔτι.

12 Ἰδοὺ ἔρχομαι ταχύ· καὶ

9 Et dicit mihi, Vide ne feceris: conservus tuus sum, et fratrum tuorum prophetarum, et eorum qui servant verba libri hujus: Deum adora.

10 Et dicit mihi, Ne signaveris verba prophetiæ libri hujus: tempus enim prope est.

11 Qui nocet noceat adhuc, et qui in sordibus est sordescat adhuc, et justus justitiam faciat adhuc, et sanctus sanctificetur adhuc.

12 Ecce venio cito: et

9 σου γάρ εἰμι. 10 τούτου· ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς ἐγγύς ἐστιν. 11 καὶ ὁ ῥυπῶν ῥυπωσάτω ἔτι, καὶ ὁ δίκαιος * δικαιωθήτω ἔτι. 12 Καὶ ἰδοὺ. ἔργον αὐτοῦ ἔσται.

9 Et *dixit* mihi. conservus *enim* tuus. verba *prophetiæ* libri. 11 et *qui* justus *est justificetur* adhuc.

plures, Κἀγὼ Ἰω. ὁ ἀκούων καὶ βλέπων ταῦτα. Dionysius Alexandrinus bis, Κἀγὼ Ἰωάννης † ὁ βλέπων καὶ ἀκούων ταῦτα. Ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ποδῶν] Alex. πρὸ ποδῶν. IX. Et *dixit* mihi] Codd. veteres constanter, *dicit*; ut Gr. λέγει. Σύνδουλός σου γάρ εἰμι. et Vulg. Conservus *enim* tuus sum] Atqui Alex. Arethas, Andreas, Athanasius, Copt. Syr. Græci Codd. omnes tollunt γάρ; et Latini itidem omnes et Cyprianus tollunt *enim*. Verba *prophetiæ* libri] Latini veteres omnes tollunt *prophetiæ*. X. Ὅτι ὁ καιρὸς ἐγγύς ἐστιν] Sic Andreas, et Cyprianus bis, *Quia jam tempus in proximo est*. Sed Alex. Codices Gr. plures, Syr. Copt. Latini omnes, Ὁ καιρὸς γὰρ ἐγγύς ἐστιν. Græci ceteri, ὁ καιρὸς ἐγγύς ἐστιν. desunt ὅτι et γάρ. XI. Καὶ ὁ ῥυπῶν ῥυπωσάτω ἔτι] Deest hoc comma in Alex. et duobus Gallicis errore librariorum ob repetitionem τοῦ ἔτι. At ceteri fere omnes, Andreas, Arethas, Complut. ὁ ῥυπαρὸς ῥυπαρευθήτω ἔτι. Origenes ad Johannem bis, ὁ ῥυπαρὸς ῥυπωθήτω ἔτι. Idem ibid. aliud membrum addit, Ὡς ὁ Ἰωάννης φησὶ, καὶ ὁ καθαρὸς καθαρισθήτω ἔτι (MS. Oxon. καθαρθήτω) καὶ ὁ ἁγ. ἁγιασθήτω. Καὶ ὁ δίκαιος δικαιωθήτω] Alex. et Codd. ceteri omnes, Andreas, Arethas, Complut. Latin. Syr. Copt. δικαιοσύνην ποιησάτω. Cyprianus bis; Justus *justiora faciat* adhuc. Et qui justus est justificetur adhuc] Veteres Codd. fere omnes, Et justus justitiam faciat adhuc. XII. Καὶ ἰδοὺ] Delent καὶ Alex. Codd.

[* ἔτι, καὶ ὁ δίκ.] ἔτι. ὁ δίκ.; Speciminis ed. pr.—D.]
[† Ἰωάννης] om. Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

ὁ μισθός μου μετ' ἐμοῦ, ἀποδοῦναι ἑκάστῳ ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ.

merces mea mecum est, reddere unicuique secundum opera sua.

13 Ἐγὼ τὸ Ἄλφα καὶ τὸ Ω, πρῶτος καὶ ἔσχατος, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος.

13 Ego Alpha et Ω, primus et novissimus, principium et finis.

14 Μακάριοι οἱ πλύνοντες τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν, ἵνα ἔσται ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ τοῖς πυλῶσιν εἰσέλθωσιν εἰς τὴν πόλιν.

14 Beati qui lavant stolas suas, ut sit potestas eorum in ligno vitæ, et portis intrent in civitatem.

15 Ἔξω οἱ κύνες καὶ οἱ

15 Foris canes et venefici

13 Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ A καὶ τὸ Ω, ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος. 14 Μακάριοι οἱ ποιοῦντες τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ, ἵνα. 15 Ἔξω δὲ οἱ κύνες. πᾶς ὁ φιλῶν.

13 Ego *sum* A et Ω. 14 stolas suas *in sanguine agni* — et *per portas* intrent.

plerique omnes, Arethas, Complut. Syr. Copt. Latini Codd. omnes. Cyprianus bis. Ἔργον αὐτοῦ ἔσται] Alex. Gallicus unus, Syr. ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ. XIII. Ἐγώ εἰμι] Omittunt* εἰμι Alex. Athanasius, Codd. fere omnes, Andreas, Arethas. Sed Origenes habet εἰμι bis. Ego *sum*] Deest *sum*. ita† codex Sancti Germani veterrimus. Ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος] Sic Andreas, Arethas, et Codd. quidam. Sed Alex. Athanas. Codd. Anglici tres, Gall. duo, Syr. Latini omnes, Cyprianus, alio ordine, πρῶτος καὶ ἔσχατος ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος. Origenes bis habet ἡ ἀρ. καὶ τὸ τέλος: sed ordine, quo‡ Andreas. XIV. Οἱ ποιοῦντες τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ] Ita Codd. Græci plerique omnes, Copt. Syr. Tertull. Cypr. Sed Alex. Anglicus unus, Æthiop. Latini Codd. omnes, *oi πλύνοντες τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν*. Athanas. *oi πλατύνοντες τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν*, errore librarii pro πλύνοντες. Arethas, ποιοῦντες τὰς ἐντολὰς ἐμοῦ: ut sententia illa postulare videtur. In sanguine agni] Desunt in veteribus Codd. omnibus. Per portas] Tres Codd. veterrimi *portis*, ut Græci omnes τοῖς πυλῶσιν. XV. Ἔξω δὲ οἱ κύνες] Omittunt§ δὲ Alex. ceteri fere omnes, Athanasius, Hippolytus, Andreas, Arethas, Complut. Latini omnes, Cyprianus. Πᾶς ὁ φιλῶν] Omittunt articulum‖ ὁ Alex. alii multi. Sed Athanasius, Hippolytus cum Codd. quibusdam, πᾶς ποιῶν

[* Omittunt] "Deest;" Speciminis ed. pr.—D.]
[† ita] om. Spec. ed. pr.—D.]
[‡ quo] "ut;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]
[§ Omittunt] "Deest;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]
[‖ Omittunt articulum] "Deest articulus;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

φαρμακοὶ καὶ οἱ πόρνοι καὶ οἱ φονεῖς καὶ οἱ εἰδωλολάτραι, καὶ πᾶς φιλῶν καὶ ποιῶν ψεῦδος.

et inpudici et homicidæ et idolis servientes, et omnis qui amat et facit mendacium.

16 Ἐγὼ Ἰησοῦς ἔπεμψα τὸν ἄγγελόν μου, μαρτυρῆσαι ὑμῖν ταῦτα ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις. Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ῥίζα καὶ τὸ γένος Δαυὶδ, ὁ ἀστὴρ ὁ λαμπρὸς καὶ ὁ πρωϊνός.

16 Ego Jesus misi angelum meum, testificari vobis hæc in ecclesiis. ego sum radix et genus David, stella splendida et matutina.

17 Καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ νύμφη λέγουσιν, Ἔρχου· καὶ ὁ ἀκούων εἰπάτω, Ἔρχου· καὶ ὁ διψῶν ἐρχέσθω· ὁ θέλων λαβέτω ὕδωρ ζωῆς δωρεάν.

17 Et spiritus et sponsa dicunt, Veni: et qui audit dicat, Veni: et qui sitit veniat: qui vult accipiat aquam vitæ gratis.

18 Μαρτυρῶ ἐγὼ παντὶ τῷ ἀκούοντι τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου, Ἐάν τις ἐπιθῇ ἐπ' αὐτὰ,

18 Contestor ego omni audienti verba prophetiæ libri hujus, Siquis adposuerit ad hæc, adponet Deus super

16 ταῦτα ἐπὶ ταῖς. γένος τοῦ Δαβὶδ. λαμπρὸς καὶ ὁ ὀρθρινός. 17 λέγουσιν, Ἐλθέ. εἰπάτω, Ἐλθέ. διψῶν ἐλθέτω, καὶ — λαμβανέτω τὸ ὕδωρ. 18 Συμμαρτυρ-

17 *et* qui vult. 18 Contestor *enim* omni.

καὶ φιλῶν. XVI. Ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις] Ἐν ταῖς Alex. Codd. 2 Gallici. Athanasius. Deest præpositio in Codd. multis. Τοῦ Δαβὶδ] Omittunt* τοῦ Alex. Codd. multi, Athanasius, Andreas, Arethas. Porro omnes Græci Δαυὶδ, vel compendiose δαδ. Nusquam invenitur Δαβὶδ. Λαμπρὸς καὶ ὁ ὀρθρινός] Alex. καὶ ὁ πρόϊνος. sed ceteri Codd. cum Athanasio, Andrea, Aretha, Complut. πρώϊνος. XVII. Ἐλθὲ — ἐλθὲ — ἐλθέτω] Alex. et ceteri omnes, Athanas. And. Arethas, Complut. ἔρχου — ἔρχου—ἐρχέσθω. Καὶ ὁ θέλων λαμβανέτω τὸ ὕδωρ] Omittunt καὶ, et postea habent ὁ θέλων† λαβέτω ὕδωρ, Alex. Codd. fere omnes, Athanasius, Andreas, Complut. *Et* qui vult] Codd. Latini veterès tollunt *et*.‡ XVIII. Συμμαρτυροῦμαι γὰρ] Alex. et alii Codd. plerique et Complut. et Andreas μαρτυρῶ ἐγὼ: pauci cum Aretha μαρτύρομαι ἐγὼ:

[* Omittunt] "Deest;" Speciminis ed. pr.—D.]

[† Omittunt καὶ, et postea habent ὁ θελ.] "Deest καὶ, et postea ὁ θελ.;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

[‡ *Et* qui vult] Codd. Latini veteres tollunt *et*] om. Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

ἐπιθήσει ὁ Θεὸς ἐπ' αὐτὸν* τὰς πληγὰς τὰς γεγραμμένας ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ·

19 Καὶ ἐάν τις ἀφέλῃ ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων τοῦ βιβλίου τῆς προφητείας ταύτης, ἀφελεῖ ὁ Θεὸς τὸ μέρος αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ ἐκ τῆς πόλεως τῆς ἁγίας, τῶν γεγραμμένων ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ.

20 Λέγει ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα, Ναὶ ἔρχομαι ταχύ. Ἀμὴν, ἔρχου κύριε Ἰησοῦ.

illum plagas scriptas in libro isto:

19 Et siquis diminuerit de verbis libri prophetiæ hujus, auferet Deus partem ejus de ligno vitæ, et de civitate sancta, [et de his] quæ scripta sunt in libro isto.

20 Dicit qui testimonium perhibet istorum, Etiam venio cito. Amen, veni domine Jesu.

οὖμαι γὰρ παντὶ ἀκού. ἐάν τις ἐπιτιθῇ πρὸς ταῦτα. ἐν βιβλίῳ. deest τῷ. 19 ἐάν τις ἀφαιρῇ — λόγων βίβλου. ἀφαιρήσει ὁ Θεὸς—ἀπὸ βίβλου τῆς ζωῆς — καὶ τῶν γεγραμ. ἐν βιβλίῳ. 20 Ναὶ ἔρχου.

19 de *libro* vitæ.

nullus, quod sciam, συμμαρτυροῦμαι, neque γὰρ. Contestor *enim* omni] Codd. veterrimi quique,† Contestor *ego* omni. Παντὶ ἀκούοντι] Alex. Andreas, Arethas, Codices plures, παντὶ τῷ ἀκ. Ἐπιτιθῇ πρὸς ταῦτα] Alex. Codd. plerique omnes, Andreas, Arethas, Complut. ἐπιθῇ ἐπ' αὐτὰ. Ἐπ' αὐτὸν] Omittit‡ Alex. sed ceteri Græci et Latini omnes cum Andrea et Aretha habent. Ἐν βιβλίῳ] Alex. Arethas, Andreas, Codd. plurimi, ἐν τῷ βιβ. XIX. Ἀφαιρῇ——ἀφαιρήσει] Alex. Codd. plerique, Andreas, Arethas, Complut. ἀφέλῃ, et deinde pro ἀφαιρήσει, Alex. Arethas cum Codd. pluribus habent ἀφελεῖ: alii cum Andrea et Complut. ἀφέλοι: et hi antea§ pro ἐπιθήσει habent ἐπιθῇ. Λόγων βίβλου] Τοῦ βιβλίου, Alex. Codd. fere omnes, Andreas, Arethas. Ἀπὸ βίβλου τῆς ζωῆς] Alex. Codd. Græci fere omnes; Andreas, Complut. Syr. Æth. ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς. De *libro* vitæ] Latini quique vetustissimi, de *ligno* vitæ. Καὶ τῶν γεγραμμένων] Omittunt‖ καὶ Alex. Codd. fere omnes, Complut. Andreas, Arethas, Copt. Syr. Æth. Ἐν βιβλίῳ] Iidem Codd. cum Andrea et Aretha ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ. XX. Ἀμὴν, ναὶ ἔρχου] Omittunt¶ ναὶ Alex. Codd. plurimi, Andreas, Syr. Copt. Æth.

[* ἐπ' αὐτὸν] om. Speciminis ed. pr.—D.]
[† quique] "quicumque;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]
[‡ Omittit] "Deest;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]
[§ antea] "supra;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]
[‖ Omittunt] "Deest;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]
[¶ Omittunt] "Deest;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

21 Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ μετὰ πάντων.

21 κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ π. ὑμῶν. Ἀμήν.

21 Gratia domini Jesu cum omnibus.

21 domini nostri Jesu Christi cum o. vobis. Amen.

XXI. Κυρίου ἡμῶν] Omittunt* ἡμῶν Alex. Codd. plures, Andreas, Arethas. Nostri] Omittit† Cod. vetustus Gallicus. Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ] Deest Χριστοῦ in Alex.‡ Christi] Omittit§ codex Anglicus. Μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν. Ἀμήν] Desunt ὑμῶν. Ἀμήν. in Alex.‖ Cum omnibus vobis, Amen] Desunt vobis, Amen; in 3 Codd. Gallicis.¶

[* Omittunt] "Deest;" Speciminis ed. pr.—D.]

[† Omittit] "Deest;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

[‡ Deest Χριστοῦ in Alex.] "Deest Alex.;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

[§ Omittit] "Deest;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

[‖ in Alex.] "Alex.;" Spec. ed. pr.—D.]

[¶ in 3 Codd. Gallicis] "3 Codd. Gallici;" Spec. ed. pr.—"In his *third edition* [of the *Proposals*] indeed, upon the notice I had taken of his *many blunders*, he has thought fit to alter *his style*, and to change the *many barbarisms of his notes* into a language more regular and intelligible, viz. instead of his *deest* δὲ *Alex. ceteri fere omnes*," &c. Middleton's *Farther Remarks*, &c. p. 23. —D.]

TO THE HONOURED * * *

AT LONDON.

HONOURED SIR,

I RECEIVED your last obliging letter; in the close of which you lay your commands on me, to tell you (if I can) who's the author of a late pamphlet, called *Remarks, Paragraph by Paragraph, upon Richard Bentley's Proposals;* and to give you my thoughts at large about the merits of that pamphlet.

The author at the first publishing might have been called *Legion;* for as his party is discovered in his very title-page, where our Master is named *Richard Bentley,* without the honour of his degree,* so of that party every one that was thought to have conceitedness and malice enough to write it was suspected to be the author. But a day or two cleared up that point. The known image of the true author was stamped so visible on't, that all suspicions soon centered in one. But his *name* I will not foul my letter with, since he himself thought it too scandalous for his own pamphlet. Nor is posterity concerned in the matter; for whenever he's carried to the grave, his memory will be buried with him. Let his name therefore be Suffenus, or Zoïlus, or Margites, or Timon, or which you please of these old heroes, whose shining characters were in whole or part so exactly like our author's.

Zoïlus, then, enters the lists with a declaration *that his Remarks were drawn from him by a serious conviction that our Master has neither TALENTS nor MATERIALS proper for the work he has undertaken:*[a] and he takes his leave

[* In 1718 Bentley had been deprived of his degrees by the Cambridge senate: on that occasion, Colbatch was one of the four Fellows of Trinity who took part against him: see Monk's *Life of B.* vol. ii. p. 60.—D.]

[a] Pag. 1.

with this aphorism, *that so much VANITY, PEDANTRY, BLUNDER, and SELF-CONTRADICTION, were hardly ever found together before within the compass of one single sheet as are in our Master's Proposals.*[b] Had our Master nine lives, as they say, you see he's in danger of all under such terrible blows of the pen. The highest reputation in letters, acquired by repeated proofs for the space of above thirty years, like Jonas's *gourd*, is in one day to be blasted by an *insect*. Let nobody confide or be secure in his good name; a *worm*, a *maggot*, without a name, can demolish it in a trice. And I have some suspicion that the curious Mr. Bradley, by observing the great power of these book-*vermin*, took the hint of his late notion, that the pestilence itself, that desolates whole countries, is nothing else than swarms of such poisonous *insects*.

Our Master therefore being so disabled, you'll give me leave to make my appearance for him, to vindicate his memory at least, if I cannot keep him longer alive.

Zoïlus *begs his reader to believe that his Remarks do not proceed from personal spleen or envy to our Master.*[c] I must say to him with old Chremes, *Vin' me istuc tibi, etsi incredibile est, credere?** Why, the *spleen* and *envy* lie so thick in every page of his pamphlet, that nothing else is visible in it. And this very thing is characteristic of our author; a sort of *proprium quarto modo*, that among ten other suspected persons distinguishes him. *No malice in this book, pray, reader, believe me:* and yet, upon search, the reader finds nothing else. We have a man among us that for many years has daily acted this grimace: he never broaches a piece of mere knavery without a preface about his *conscience;* nor ever offers to us downright nonsense without eyes, muscles, and shoulders wrought up into the most solemn posture of gravity.

Our *censor*, after his preface, comes directly to his work; and, that nothing may escape him, falls a-gnawing, like a

[b] Pag. 24. [c] Pag. 1.

[* Ter. *Heaut.* iv. 1. 11.—D.]

rat, the very title-page of our Master's Testament. He owns *it may be in the style of some other editions*,[d] but by no means must be allowed in his. And though in another place he accuses our Master, *that his whole life has been spent in critical niceties and observations on classical authors*,[e] yet in this our crazy-headed *censor* pretends to teach him how to write Latin. But this point is too dry and jejune to have any room in this letter.

And now, ere he enters upon his learning, as a whet to our appetite he gives us a cast of his wit. *Mr. Walker*, says he, *has almost all the trouble of the work; and yet our Master reserves the whole reputation of it to himself, with an* EDIDIT RICHARDUS BENTLEIUS.[f] Why, to do our *censor* justice, I forgive and allow his indignation at this. For it's the very reverse to what he himself uses to do; who has often *had all the trouble*, has wrote several libels against our Master, our College, and the very Government; and yet *never reserved the reputation to himself*, but generously resigned it to another, *with an* EDIDIT CONYERS MIDDLETON.* We are now arrived at his Remarks on

Paragraph the First,

which, when you have turned to and read over, I'll engage you'll be forced to own is drawn up in the modestest, tenderest words that the nature of the thing can bear. Not the smallest reproach nor reflection upon the prior editors: *they*

[d] P. 4. [e] P. 16. [f] Pag. 4.

[* "I declare," says Middleton, "that I never yet published any thing in my life that was not strictly and entirely of my own composing, nor any thing at all that ever related to, or *reflected in any manner upon the Government*: I did, indeed, in a late pamphlet, represent the *just complaints of the Fellows of his College* (*my old friends and fellow-sufferers*) against his *oppressive government*; for which he is now prosecuting me by way of *information in the King's Bench*." *Farther Remarks*, &c. p. 3: see also Colbatch's declaration, note, p. 481. But there is no doubt that in writing the pamphlet mentioned above, *A true Account of the State of Trinity College*, &c. 1719, (a portion of which was construed into a libel on the king's government and the administration of justice) Middleton derived assistance from the papers of Colbatch.—D.]

followed the best MSS. they then could procure: here are now older and better to be come at; and so a new edition may be of good use. Can any thing be more innocent? and yet see how our *censor* roars, bellows, and calls the mob together, as if whole church was in flames: *it destroys at once the authority of all our published Scriptures; cries down by a sort of papal edict all our current editions, as corrupt and adulterate; injustice and barbarity; insult upon the sense and judgment of the learned world; raises an universal resentment and indignation.*[s]

If you are not quite frightened already, pray reserve a little courage, notwithstanding all this bombast. We know the animal here thoroughly well; and when he has outroared all the lions in Libya, he kindly shews us, by his long ears, that we were in no danger. These are only *veteres artes*, his old pranks, that he often plays here. In the midst of college plenty, with five thousand pounds surplusage above all expenses, he can bawl with tragical tone, and lungs stronger than a smith's bellows, *destruction, dilapidation, ruin*, upon the laying out of five pounds, while he himself never acquired to the public one groat.

If he's come a little to himself, I would ask him one civil question. Pray, good friend Timon, though our Master, as you vouch, has neither *talents* nor *materials* for such a work, yet another man, I hope, may have them; and a better edition than the present ones is not one of the impossibles. Suppose, then, that other man, and, if you please, your learned self, has a more correct edition to offer to the world than any yet extant. How, in the name of common sense, must you make your proposal? In our Master's style, by telling the plain fact, *better manuscripts are now to be had than the former editors could come at*, not assuming great merit to himself, but imputing it to a good *Providence?* Or will you say, in your own nonsense, I have an edition, indeed, to offer to the world, that improves the former ones in some thousands of places, but the very attempt *destroys the*

[s] Pag. 5.

authority of all our published Scriptures, cries 'em down as corrupt and adulterate, is an act of injustice and barbarity, is an insult upon common sense, deserves an universal resentment and indignation?

*Ah Timon, Timon, quæ te dementia cepit?**

Either say that no man in the world can give a better edition than those already extant, or grant that the man that can do it must, of necessity, say in his proposal that the extant editions are erroneous and imperfect.

And yet, with the blessing of God, that man will neither *destroy all authority of public Scriptures*, nor incur *the universal resentment* of men of piety and letters. For if that is certainly his fate, how came Erasmus, without public censure, except of some Timons of that age, to refine by repeated editions not only upon the Complutenses, but even upon himself? How came Robert Stephens, a mere printer, with public acceptation and applause to refine upon them both? And may not our Master say with his Horace, *ego cur, adquirere pauca Si possum, invideor?*† Has not he the common right to add his mite to the Scripture treasury? to use his talent, if he has any? Our censor indeed affirms he has none; but whether he or I are mistaken in that, the present letter, before it's concluded, may perhaps help to determine.

There's nothing so nauseous and provoking as a superficial ostentation of learning, while profound ignorance lies at the bottom. Old Zoïlus has filled near two pages with citations from the most obvious places, prefaces to books. And what's the mighty result? Why, the Complutensian edition was made *from manuscripts of the greatest antiquity, venerandæ vetustatis spectatæque fidei*:[h] and *Erasmus's edition* (he might have said *editions*, for he changed in each of them) *was made from the most correct and ancient manu-*

[* Virg. *Ecl.* ii. 69. "Ah *Corydon, Corydon*, quæ," &c.—D.]
[† *A. P.* 55.—D.]
[h] Pag. 5.

scripts:[i] *and Rob. Stephens collected from MSS. the best and most ancient.*[j] Now, what is all this vulgar stuff for? The *venerable* MSS. of the Complutenses did not hinder Erasmus from varying from them in a thousand places; nor did Erasmus's *correct and ancient MSS.* deter Rob. Stephens from doing the like by his. What, therefore, does our censor gain or mean by all this? Yes, it shews *how just and modest our Master has been in this paragraph, to treat such MSS. as of no great antiquity, but recent and interpolated.*[k]

Commend me to the man, that with a thick hide and solid forehead can stand bluff against plain matter of fact. The world has now advanced two whole centuries in age since the date of the Complutensian and Erasmus's edition; and as much, within thirty years, since that of Rob. Stephens. Within that space of time God's providence (if Zoïlus will allow that) has brought older MSS. into light than those editors knew. Every thing is comparatively old or recent: in those days, when no better were seen, they gave the titles of *ancient* and *venerable* to MSS. that are now scarce reckoned in the second or third rate. I can tell our *censor*, that our Master's edition will chiefly turn upon eight Greek manuscripts, the most recent of which is a thousand year[s] old; and that without the concurrence of some of these, he'll scarce put one word in his text. Now of all these eight not one was used either by the Complutenses or Erasmus; and only one of them by Robert Stephens, and that very negligently.

Ay, but the sting comes in the tail: *barbarous is our Master's treatment of the first editors; but of his old friend Dr. Mill, unjust, ungrateful, unpardonable.*[l] Does not this look like a laudable and generous indignation? *Ingratum dixeris, omnia dixeris.** And yet we, that know the *censor*,

[i] Pag. 6. [j] Ibid.

[k] Pag. 6. [l] Pag. 6, 7.

[* "Dixeris maledicta cuncta, ingratum cum hominem dixeris." P. Syri et al. *Sent.* 250. ed. Bent.—D.]

cannot but sneer at his naming the word *ungrateful;* who to the few benefactors he has had (of whom our Master has been, though the lowest, not the least) has shewn himself not ungrateful only, but so virulent and malignant as is really detestable. He had once the honour to have a noble *duke* and a great *bishop* for his patrons;* who, after sundry favours bestowed, when they would not comply at last with his insolent demands, our public coffee-houses rung here with the vilest names, *scoundrel*, &c. in defiance not of decency only, but of *scandalum magnatum*.

But why this outcry of *ingratitude* against Dr. Mill, when our Master not once names him in his *Proposals?* Or why is Dr. Mill's work brought here in comparison, which is different *toto genere* from our Master's design? Dr. Mill follows the text of Stephens to a letter, even where he decides against it: our Master, where he has good authority, deserts that text, and gives a new one, in thousands of places: Dr. Mill's view was to accumulate various readings as a promptuary to the judicious and critical reader: our Master makes use of that promptuary, and has furnished himself with much greater, to determine the genuine readings, and not leave the reader in doubt and suspense.

Nay, but our Master *has borrowed all his materials from Dr. Mill's magazine, which he gathered with incredible pains and industry for thirty years together.*[m] Now with what *conscience*, a good word perpetually in his foul mouth, can this *censor* tell the world this? He pretend to know and to declare what our Master *has done*, or *can do!* Dear Timon, have patience till the edition comes out; and then *res ipsa*

[* See Monk's *Life of Bentley*, vol. i. p. 384 sqq. for a detailed account of the unworthy treatment which Colbatch experienced from the Duke of Somerset and Bishop Burnet. There can be no doubt that the former forgot and disclaimed his promises to Colbatch, who had been tutor to his son, the Earl of Hertford. If the allusion above be to those patrons, it is peculiarly unbecoming; for Bentley himself had supported the cause of Colbatch by representations to the duke.—D.]

[m] Pag. 6, 7.

loquetur, the work will shew itself. In the mean time, if Dr. Mill's industry is *incredible*, I hope our Master's will be *credible* at least, when I assure you, that of the eight Greek manuscripts above mentioned, on which our Master's text will depend, four (and the four principal, bating the Alexandrine) were never collated by or for Dr. Mill. Not to add, that our Master has taken *credible pains* in collating with his own hand a score of old Latin Testaments, besides those he has procured at his expense: a labour untouched by Dr. Mill, who in the *thirty years* never collated one Latin Vulgate, nor ever once dreamed of the excellent use of it.

I had hopes that the drudgery of this paragraph had been despatched; but by looking over it again, I find a weighty argument for the Complutensian edition, *that seven of the copies there used cost Cardinal Ximenes four thousand crowns.*[n] Very good, and very honourable for his memory. But what's this to our Master? Four *millions* of crowns would not buy the MSS. that he has got collated for his edition; and I can assure our *censor*, that our Master, without a cardinal's purse, has expended one thousand crowns, not to possess them, but to use them.

For a parting blow in this paragraph, he brandishes his wit again. *NOW*, said our Master, by God's providence, there are MSS. in Europe: *as if*, says our censor, *they had never been in Europe till now; but were just now dug out of the ground like medals, or imported lately from the East or West Indies for the service of his edition.*[o] Now a wit of the common magnitude would have been content with importing MSS. from Asia, Syria, or Greece; but our censor, scorning every thing common, will fetch *ancient Greek* from Mogul and America. But his silly irony, like the fool's bolt, recoils upon himself. For since the *first editors'* time, of which our Master speaks, the greatest part of the Greek MSS. he uses were really brought from the East into Europe. What! does not Suffenus know that our Alexandrine came from

[n] Pag. 5. [o] Pag. 7.

Constantinople, a whole century after Stephens's days? And most of the rest, for all his grin, were really dug out of the ground, *ex situ et pulvere eruti*, where they had long lain buried in old ruinous cloisters.

But now prepare for a stabbing push, a piece of capital and transcendent wit. Are manuscripts *now accessible? it's very certain then*, says he, *that* library-keepers *abroad have more* humanity *and less* envy *than some I could name at home*.[p] What a pity 'tis that this sparkling repartee is not new and his own, but borrowed from old Phalaris, *pro singulari sua humanitate!** And methinks the very *omen* of it might have kept our *censor's* fingers from pilfering such unlucky goods; from stealing *cotton* at Marseilles while infected with the plague.

Ah, quæ te mala mens, miselle Timon? †
—— *Tune etiam telis moriere Dianæ?* ‡

Paragraph the Second.

This, says he, is *the applauded and momentous paragraph*, which opens the *great design* on which *the reason and necessity and the whole merit of this new edition is built;* and therefore, says he, (now, Master, look to yourself,) *it will deserve a very PARTICULAR EXAMINATION*.[q]

After he has diverted himself with turning a *thought a priori* and confirmed by event into an *odd accident and fortuitous concourse of atoms*,[r] he takes a serious air, and with

[p] Pag. 7.

[* See Bentley's Preface to *Diss. upon Epist. of Phalaris*, p. 1, and editor's Preface, p. vii., in vol. i. of the present edition.—D.]

[† "*Quænam* te mala mens, miselle *Ravide*." Catull. *Carm.* xl. ed. Doer.—D.]

[‡ Virg. *Æn.* xi. 857.—D.]

[q] Pag. 7.

[r] Pag. 7.—["Here we are entertained with a short history of our editor's great design, and what an odd accident, what a fortuitous concourse of atoms gave birth to this mighty work: *thinking*, it seems, upon *some passages of St. Hieron*, he first took a *hint*, which being improved presently into a *conjecture*, turned itself soon afterwards into a *clue* which *extricated* him out of the *labyrinth*, and so the business was done: this being therefore the applauded momentous paragraph," &c.—D.]

becoming sufficiency (for if learned Timon knows not a thing, who should?) he *much questions whether it is to be found in direct and express terms in any part of St. Hierom's works, that he adjusted and reformed the WHOLE Latin Vulgate to the best Greek exemplars.*[s] To answer, therefore, with great ease, what Suffenus so much questions. In his epistle *ad Lucinium* St. Hierom has these words: *Many years ago,* says he, *I have given to the curious the version of the Septuagint, corrected most carefully: the* NEW (Latin) TESTAMENT *I have corrected by authority of the Greek.*[t] Again, in his *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum: The* NEW TESTAMENT, says he, *I have adjusted to the authentic Greek; the Old I have translated according to the authentic Hebrew.*[u] In his epistle *ad Marcellam: I am told,* says he, *that some sorry fellows* (homunculos quosdam; for he too had to deal with Zoïlus's and Timons) *rail at me, that against the authority of the ancients and the opinion of the whole world, I presumed to correct any passages in the* GOSPELS —— *Let them take this answer, that I had a mind to reform the faultiness of the Latin copies, which is apparent by the variations of all of them, to the original Greek, from whence they themselves do not deny they were translated.*[v]

I know friend Zoïlus will be at catch here; and with supercilious air observe, that the last citation speaks only of the *Gospels,* and not of the whole *New Testament.* But if he'll vouchsafe to learn any thing from a *junior,* I can tell

[s] Pag. 8.

[t] Septuaginta Interpretum editionem ... ante annos plurimos diligentissime emendatam studiosis tradidi: NOVUM TESTAMENTUM Græcæ reddidi auctoritati. [Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. P. II. p. 579. ed. 1693.—D.]

[u] NOVUM TESTAMENTUM Græcæ fidei reddidi: Vetus juxta Hebraïcam transtuli. [Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. P. II. p. 130. ed. 1693.—D.]

[v] Ad me portatum est, quosdam homunculos studiose mihi detrahere, cur, adversum auctoritatem veterum et totius mundi opinionem, aliqua in EVANGELIIS emendare tentaverim.—Responsum habeant, ... me ... Latinorum codicum vitiositatem, quæ ex diversitate librorum omnium comprobatur, ad Græcam originem, unde et ipsi translata non denegant, voluisse revocare. [Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. P. II. p. 61. ed. 1693, where "Ad me *repente perlatum* est, quosdam homunculos mihi studiose detrahere," &c.—D.]

him, that the ancient Fathers, when they say the *Evangelia*, mean not seldom the whole *N. T.* This appears even from this very letter *ad Marcellam:* for St. Hierom thus proceeds, in his answer to those that had railed at him for changing the old text: *Let those fellows,* says he, *read,* Serving the TIME; *let us read,* Serving the LORD.[w] *Let them say absolutely,* Against an elder receive not an accusation; *let us add,* But under two or three witnesses.[x] *Let them read,* This is a HUMANE saying, and worthy of all acceptation; *let us read,* This is a FAITHFUL saying.[y] Now from these places it's clear, that though he speaks before of the *Evangelia,* yet the examples are all taken out of St. Paul's epistles; and it's clear that he had corrected these very three passages; all which stand so corrected to this day in the *Vulgate.* Under the word *Evangelia,* therefore, he comprehended the whole Testament.

By this time, sir, you are sensible what a shrewd and learned adversary I have upon my hands: and I should step now to the next passage in question, but I am stopped and recalled by one of his impertinencies. He that knew nothing of these several passages of Hierom, struts with the most obvious one out of his preface to Damasus,[z] which stands in the front of every *Vulgate* Testament; and even that he understands not. That Father declares there, he reformed the Latin Gospels, codicum Græcorum collatione, sed VETERUM, *by comparing them with the Greek exemplars, but* ANCIENT *ones:* this our censor translates, *the Greek copies* OF HIS TIME: nay, with the censor's leave, BEFORE HIS TIME; that is, as our Master has observed, those of the famous Origen. Nor does our censor understand the words he cites: *Ita calamo temperavimus, ut, his tantum quæ sensum videbantur mutare correctis, reliqua manere pateremur ut fuerant:** the true meaning of which is this; that he did not change the words of the old Latin version, except in places

[w] Rom. xii. 11.
[x] 1 Tim. v. 19.
[y] 1 Tim. i. 15.
[z] Pag. 8.
[* Hieron. *Opp.* t. i. p. 1426. ed. 1693.—D.]

that affected the sense: the rest he suffered to stand, though he thought them not the most proper; and contented himself with rescinding the superfluous words, and adding the deficient. This, if our *censor* pleases, he may call *only touching over;* but this is all that our Master expects, and all that he wants from it.

It's probable, says our censor, *that* the order of words *stood much the same both before and after Hierom's correction.*[a] In this passage with his *probable,* much like his former *much question,* our censor is as sharp-sighted as any mole. I shall clear that anon, in a place more proper.

He joins with Dr. Mill in a reflection upon St. Hierom: *We are glad that he gave himself no greater liberties in his correction.*[b] Dr. Mill, indeed, through all his *Prolegomena* treats that learned Father not with injustice only, but contumely; pretends that he spoiled the old Italic version (equal almost, if you'll believe the Dr., to the apostles' and evangelists' own originals,) while he endeavoured to mend it. Of all which Dr. Mill, with his *incredible diligence,* knew no more than our *censor* does. When our Master's edition comes out, it will put that whole matter in a new and true light, will shew there was no such version as that pretended *Italic,** will vindicate St. Hierom's honour, and shew in his revising the old Vulgate what excellent service he did to the church.

We come now to the second passage quoted by our Master, UBI IPSE VERBORUM ORDO MYSTERIUM

[a] Pag. 8. [b] Pag. 8.

[* The only writer of antiquity who mentions the Italic version is St. Augustin, in these words:—"In ipsis autem interpretationibus *Itala* ceteris præferatur; *nam* est verborum tenacior, cum perspicuitate sententiæ." *De Doct. Christ.* lib. ii. c. xv. *Opp.* t. iii. P. I. p. 27. ed. 1680. The passage was thus corrected by Bentley, "——*illa* ceteris præferatur, *quæ* est," &c. See Casly's Preface to *Cat. of the MSS. of the King's Library,* p. xix. Lardner's *Cred. of the Gosp. Hist., Works,* vol. v. pp. 115, 116. ed. 1788. Marsh's Notes on Michaelis's *Introd. to the N. T.* vol. ii. P. II. pp. 621, 622. ed. 1793. Bentley's Correspondence with the Benedictines of St. Maur, &c. in Kidd's *Porson's Tracts,* &c. Preface, p. lvi. sqq.: and Monk's *Life of Bentley,* vol. ii. pp. 125, 126. —When he wrote the *Remarks* on Collins, Bentley seems to have believed in the existence of the Italic version: see p. 364.—D.]

EST, which our *censor* works and sweats at for 3 whole pages together, resolving to undermine and demolish it, as the sole basis of the new edition.

The passage here referred to, in the printed editions of St. Hierom stands thus: *Sed libera voce profiteor, me in interpretatione Græcorum, absque Scripturis sanctis, ubi et verborum ordo* [*et*] *mysterium est, non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu.*[c] I have put the second *et* within hooks, to make what I am going to say more easy and clear. Our Master, with his usual sagacity, saw at first view that the second *et* made the passage flat nonsense: *Except in the Holy Scriptures, where there is both order of words and mystery.* What? is there in the Scriptures *alone* order of words to be found? Is it not in profane writings too, in all writings whatever? Throw out that *et* therefore, and the sense is clear; for then the other *et* is the same as *etiam: I own freely,* says the Father, *that in translating of Greek books,* except in the Holy Scriptures, where even the order of words is mystery, *I do not express word by word, but sense by sense.* This emendation is so plain, that, now our Master has found it out, nobody but a mere idiot will deny or doubt it. Let's see what our censor says to it.

He first discovers *that by two ets,* ordo verborum *and* mysterium *are plainly disjoined and distinguished from each other:* that our Master casts one *et* out, and instead of the other *claps in an* ipse, *to make the words express more roundly the sense he would put upon them.*[d]

You'll please, sir, to believe, when I tell you, that our Master's Proposals being drawn up in haste, in one evening by candle-light, and printed the next day from that first and sole draught, (which haste likewise hindered him from revising the sheet, and so left several false accents and points in the *Specimen* itself,) he consulted not S. Hierom, but cited the passage by memory: whereby it happened that for *ubi* et *verborum ordo,* he put *ubi* ipse *verborum ordo.*

[c] St. Hier. De optimo genere interpretandi. [*Opp.* t. iv. P. II. p. 250. ed. 1693. —D.]

[d] Pag. 8.

But that *et* and *ipse* have the very same meaning here, every schoolboy can see: 'tis just as in English; where *even the order of words*, or *the very order of words*, are perfectly equivalent.

Even our censor himself, who never made one emendation in his life, is afraid to deny that the emendation is just. *He'll not dispute, therefore, about the different significations which this passage and our Master's citation might bear; but will allow for once that both express the same thing.*[e]

Both express the same thing? well then, the point is agreed. Nay, hold a little; for, notwithstanding the *allowance*, he says, *it's very easy to shew our Master has widely mistaken the true sense and meaning.*[f] An agreeable instance of acute penetration! I ALLOW, says he, *that both express the same thing*, viz. *that in the Scriptures even the order of words is mystery*; and yet *it's easy to shew* that St. Hierom did not mean, *that in the Scriptures the order of words is mystery.* Either this is plain self-contradiction, or there's but one way to get rid of it, by supposing that St. Hierom's words, like our *censor's*, have no *meaning* at all.

Our censor proceeds to give a dull and false abstract of the treatise of St. Hierom:[g] I shall do it more clearly and honestly. St. Hierom had translated into Latin a complaining letter of Epiphanius to Chrysostom, both his own contemporaries; and was charged by some friends to the latter, that he had not done justice in his version, nor translated the words exactly, but warped them, as they thought, to Chrysostom's prejudice. He defends himself from this charge, not by denying the fact, but excusing it from necessity. 'That the genius of the two languages were different; that a verbal interpretation, especially in books of elaborate style, would look barbarous and absurd; that Cicero and others had made free translations, without confinement to the very words; that he himself never did nor would translate otherwise, *except in the Holy Scriptures, where* (less than the words) *even the order of the words was mystery;*

[e] Pag. 8. [f] Pag. 8. [g] Pag. 9.

and yet even in the very Scriptures, neither the *Septuagint* in their version, nor the *Evangelists* and *Apostles* in their citations from the Old Testament, did adhere strictly to the words.' This is the substance of that treatise; and from this our Master took the thought, both a new and a noble one, that St. Hierom, who many years before had corrected the *vulgar* Latin by the Greek, durst not have used this expression, *that in the Scriptures the very order of words is mystery*, if he had not kept close to the order in his own edition of the Scriptures. And upon making the essay, by comparing the oldest copies of the Greek and Latin now extant, our Master reaped most glorious fruit of his sagacity and his labour, when he found that the learned Father had spoke true; that his correction, when it first came from his hand, did certainly so agree; and that the present agreement, even after 1300 years, is surprising and astonishing.

But our *censor* affirms, that in that very tract St. Hierom declares, that (besides the Septuagint, Evangelists, and Apostles) *neither the other* best interpreters of Scripture, *nor the* Vulgate edition *itself, nor* the Fathers, *had any regard in their translations of Scripture to the words or order of words, but only to the sense.*[h] What shall we say to such provoking confidence? Is this the *conscientious* Timon? We must imitate Monsieur Pascal in his *Provincial Letters*, who both uses and recommends the answer of honest Father Valerian to such a creature as our *censor*, MENTIRIS IMPUDENTISSIME. I have read that short tract over on purpose; and assure you there's not one word in it of *best interpreters*, or *Latin Vulgate*, or *Fathers*.

Our *censor* is resolved to hammer out some different meaning out of Hierom's passage, cost what it will: he lays hold on the poor particle *ubi*, which must *bear a restrained and particular sense to such particular places of the Holy Scriptures where et verborum ordo et mysterium est* (that is, for I must English it for him, *where there is both order of words and mystery*).[i] These *particular places*, he first says,

[h] Pag. 9.

[i] Pag. 9.

must certainly be looked for in the Old Testament:[j] but presently he revokes that, and declares, *that neither our Master nor any man else knows where to find them.*[k] Give honest Timon his due: he has spoke one true thing in his pamphlet. As to places, indeed, where *mystery* is, a man cannot miss; but for *particular* places of Scripture where *order of words* is, exclusive to others where (it seems) there's *no order of words*, I would challenge Argus himself or Lynceus to spy them.

No one writer, continues our censor, *that I have yet heard of, has ever affirmed that the order of words in the New Testament is mysterious: and I could shew from twenty places of St. Hierom, that he never in the least dreamt of confining himself to the order of words in any of his versions.*

To his noise and bounce of *twenty passages in St. Hierom*, I return again (for he deserves no other) the blunt answer of Father Valerian. But since *he never heard of one writer* (wonderful in the omniscious Timon), I'll endeavour to help his hearing. St. Hierom himself, in his *Commentary* on the *Ephesians*, cap. iii., says thus: *I know the adding of the preposition* CON *in the words* coheredes, concorporales, *and* comparticipes, *makes but an odd figure in the Latin tongue; yet because that preposition is in the Greek, and because in* the divine writings every WORD, SYLLABLE, TITTLE, and POINT, ARE FULL OF SENSES, *we choose therefore rather to forego the composition and structure of the words than to weaken the meaning.*[l] What says our censor now? Are not *syllables, tittles, points*, as small things as *the order of words;* or can those subsist without this? Is not *plena sunt sensibus, full of senses*, deep, latent, recondite

[j] Pag. 9. [k] Pag. 10.

[l] Scio appositionem conjunctionis ejus, per quam dicitur, *coheredes* et *concorporales*, et *comparticipes*, indecoram facere in Latino sermone sententiam: sed quia ita habetur in Græco, et singuli SERMONES, SYLLABÆ, APICES, PUNCTA, in divinis Scripturis plena sunt SENSIBUS, . . magis volumus in compositione structuraque verborum, quam intelligentia periclitari. [Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. p. 1. p. 350. ed. 1693.—D.]

senses, as strong an expression as *mystery?* Is not this spoke of the *New Testament,* and of the Greek? To quote more to the same purpose would be running into commonplace; but this alone is sufficient to let our *censor* see that there are more things in the Fathers than every casuistic drudge* can find in the pious and polite volumes of Diana and Escobar.

That the Latin interpreters of Scripture confined themselves in their versions to the *order of words* (except in cases of necessity, where, though the original was clear, the version by its ambiguity might create an absurd or impious sense), is both plain in fact at this day, and affirmed by the Fathers themselves. And though every body perhaps did not know this, yet nobody but a hard-faced Timon would have the confidence to deny it. St. Hilary, in his *Commentary* on the lxviith *Psalm: Laboriosius autem,* says he, *et obscurius, dum* COLLOCATIONES VERBORUM *non demutat, translatio Latina declarat: ceterum absolutius totum hoc sermo e Græco enuntiatus eloquitur.* And again on the *same Psalm: Id . . his verbis, quæ Latine minus expresse atque absolute translata sunt, continetur: admonui enim superius, plerumque interpretes cunctos, dum* COLLOCATIONEM ORDINEMQUE VERBORUM *demutare ac temperare non audent, minus dilucide proprietatem declarasse dictorum.*† Here it's expressly said twice, *that while* ALL *the* (Latin) *interpreters* DARED *not to* CHANGE *the* COLLOCATION *and* ORDER *of Words* (in the Greek), *they frequently expressed that obscurely which in the original was clear.* Pray, how came they not to *dare* to change the order, even to the detriment of the sense, unless they thought there was *mystery* in't? And if they were so scrupulous in translating the Greek *Septuagint,* can they be supposed to make more bold and free with the *Evangelists* and *Apostles?*

The matter of fact verifies this: there are four or five

[* An allusion to Colbatch's professorship: see p. 481.—D.]

[† Hilar. *Opp.* pp. 197, 203. ed. 1698.—D.]

very old MSS. extant with the Greek on one hand and a Latin version on the other; the Beza's MS. at Cambridge containing the *Gospels* and *Acts*, another of the *Acts* at Oxford, three more of St. Paul's epistles at Paris and elsewhere. In all these line answers to line, and word to word in order. Such books as these gave the model to the Latin versions that had no Greek joined with them. Order of words is preserved in all, allowing for the negligence of copiers. Even the passages cited by the Latin Fathers as carefully pursue the order as those in the Greek Fathers cited from the original: and our Master makes that use of both of them in his edition. Old Timon now will go puzzle himself, and try this by experience. But what *criterion* has he to try by? He'll find hundreds of variations in the printed books, which in our Master's manuscripts will be all found to agree.

Methinks I have breathed in clear air while I was writing this last page; I must now return to fog and dulness, and follow Timon where he carries me. He brings[m] a long citation out of Hierom's letter to Austin; but his usual fate attends him, that it makes directly against him. The case is this: St. Austin, in a prior letter, had expostulated with Hierom, why in his former translation of Job out of the LXX. he had added marks, *obels* and *asterisks*, to determine every word to the greatest niceness; but in his new translation of Job from the Hebrew, *non eadem verborum fides occurrit,* the same vouching for the words was not found?* This shews what St. Austin expected in a translator of Scripture. To this St. Hierom replies, that there was no need of such marks in a version where nothing was added or left out; he having translated it exactly from the Hebrew, but *sensuum potius veritatem, quam* VERBORUM ORDINEM INTERDUM *conservantes,*† SOMETIMES *preserving the trueness of the sense rather than the* ORDER OF WORDS.

[m] Pag. 9, 10. [* Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. p. ii. p. 610. ed. 1693.—D.]
[† Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. p. ii. p. 626. ed. 1693.—D.]

Is not this demonstration, that Hierom (and other interpreters) strove as much as possible to adhere to the *order?* *Sometimes,* he says, he was forced to vary from it, and that in Job, the difficultest book of the whole Scripture; the sense of which, as he says in another place, is so *slippery, that like an eel or a lamprey, the more you think to hold it, the sooner it slides out of your hand.*

But for all this our censor still persists, that the *notion is absurd and impossible, a silly fancy* of our Master's.[n] *Ne sævi, magne sacerdos:* * rude words will not do the business. He'll prove too, from Erasmus, Arias Montanus, and Beza, *that the vulgar Latin often deserts the Greek.*[o] If our Master begs subscriptions, as Timon reproaches him, sagacious Timon will be even with him in *begging the question.* Why, what Greek, what *Vulgate?* those that they saw and used. But each of those will differ from our Master's Greek and *Vulgate* in thousands of places. If theirs had agreed two centuries ago, then indeed our Master's edition would now be as *useless* and *needless* as Timon would gladly make it. *But we need go no farther,* continues he, *than our* author's own Specimen, *where in the Latin text, as it stands dressed up by himself, we see MANY considerable variations in the order of words from the Greek, viz.* verse ii. v. viii. ix. xii. xiv. &c.[p]

And I say, *we need go no farther* than this paragraph for a *specimen* of the greatest malice and impudence that ever scribbler out of the dark committed to paper. Why, courteous Timon, if our Master's own *Specimen* had so confuted his Proposals, he might have been begged (which you may be in danger of) for a *lunatic;* there needed no pamphlet to quash the edition: your *spleen* and *envy* might have been reserved for another occasion. Of the *six* variations that our censor brings, *four* are no variations of order. Verse ii. *τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐκεῖθεν,* you cannot translate word for word without a barbarism, *fluvii hinc et*

[n] Pag. 10.

[o] Ibid.

[* Virg. *Æn.* vi. 544. "*magna* sac."—D.]

[p] Pag. 10.

inde: so that this is no breach of order, but an equivalent expression, which the translator was forced to. So verse xii. ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ, 'twould have been most awkward in Latin, *sicut opus est ejus;* he judiciously therefore changed the whole, *reddere unicuique* SECUNDUM OPERA SUA. Verse ix. there's no change, ὅρα μὴ, *vide ne* feceris, but a necessary addition of a word; use and custom among the Latins not allowing the Greek *aposiopesis.* Verse xiv. Father Valerian again; for there's not the least change either in word or order. And then for his *etcetera,* O truth, O sincerity, O conscientious director of conscience! 'Twas to insinuate there were many more behind: I do affirm, any one may see, and he well knew, there's not one more. So that all his MANY CONSIDERABLES are dwindled to two; and those we shall see of what great consideration. Ver. v. οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι, *ultra non erit* instead of *non erit ultra.* Verse viii. τοῦ δεικνύοντός μοι ταῦτα, *qui mihi hæc ostendebat* for *qui ostendebat mihi hæc.*

And now are not these variations of the highest importance both for number and sense? In the next page the wretch can insinuate, *that our Master will wrest and force both texts, to make them answer as well as he can, to his hypothesis:*[q] and his native stupidity could not let him see that the one of these accusations contradicts and confutes the other. For if our Master was disposed to *warp* and *force* his texts, how easily could he have set those two places in the right order, and have kept his own counsel! Can we desire a greater instance of his fidelity and sincerity in the promised edition? He left those places as he found them, not yet having seen any MSS. that represent them otherwise. He feared not but that all men of common sense and common candour would look on the CCCLX. hits that are in that chapter, and not from two small slips imagine that all those agreements came by chance, without the translator's design or thought; would look more on the XXX. variations that appeared, before his *Specimen,* between

[q] Pag. 11.

the two texts, and are now reconciled from the best copies, than on two trifling variations that still remain. And, pray, has our Master undertook or promised that not one variation shall remain in the whole New Testament? To accomplish that, after XIII. centuries, though he had all the copies in the world, would be a sort of miracle. All he declares is only this, *that he succeeds in his essay beyond his expectation or even his hopes.* And we may venture it upon this very *Specimen,* if he has not exceeded other men's expectations and hopes as much as his own.

But to return to our *censor;* he tells us for news, that Robert Stephens and Monsieur Toinard reckoned the Latin *Vulgate* as good as one Greek exemplar.[r] And so do others: and not that only, but the Syriac and Coptic. The Greek LXX. served Cappellus and others for an exemplar of the Hebrew. But what this is to our Master's edition I cannot conjecture. While our *censor* was hunting for materials, he lit upon these two scraps, and resolved not to lose them. But Dr. Mill *has retrieved the true readings of the OLD Vulgate with the very Greek from whence they were taken, which was probably that of the age next to the apostles.*[s] Our *censor* does not know one tittle of what he says here, nor what the *Old Vulgate* means. Before St. Hierom's time there were *innumerable* Latin translations (as St. Austin testifies), that went about in the western churches, all differing from each other (as both he and St. Hierom say), and consequently most if not all of them faulty, being translated from faulty Greek ones. And by that occasion there are at this day more variations from the present Greek than by all the other copies in the world. And Dr. Mill, who took all that heap of those vitious copies for one, under the name of *Vetus Italica,* superstitiously and ignorantly made it his idol; and has quite spoiled, not his edition, but his *Prolegomena* by it; which, though he gives us as his last thoughts, to over-rule every thing that he had wrote before on the

[r] Pag. 11. [s] Pag. 11.

text, is a piece of the most unfortunate and erroneous *critic* that ever saw the light. *Amicus Millius, sed magis amica veritas.* I shall say more of it by and by.

Our *censor* concludes his Remarks on this second paragraph with a smart push *ad hominem*, out of our Master's *sermon upon popery*. In that, it seems, he had blamed the papists *for exalting the authority of the Latin translation above the Greek original;* and now Zoïlus, with his great penetration, discovers that our Master by his promised edition *is doing much the same thing*:[t] and then he runs to his fusty common-place out of the *Council of Trent* and Bellarmine. I must reply with honest Geta in the comedy,*

—— Nihil est, Zoïle,
Quin male narrando possit depravarier.

The case is entirely different: the Popes have authorised and authenticated a particular edition, which is frequently faulty; our Master, before he uses the *Vulgate*, corrects it from better MSS. than they either had or knew how to use, in thousands of places: he takes it only as an assistant, directing us to discover the genuine Greek; he never once makes the genuine Greek bend and yield to the Latin, nor deserts that to comply with this. Neither does he print the Latin with any other view than as a good voucher of XIII. hundred years' age, that the Greek, which out of many varieties our Master selects for his text, is that genuine text that was in public use in the III. and IV. centuries. And here indeed comes the use and service of that *judgment and experience* which our Master speaks of as *characters requisite*.[u] Here are XXX. thousand variations already published of the Greek; and I have heard him say, that he has met with as many in the copies of the *Vulgate* itself. Find me now the *clue* (which Zoïlus[v] grins at) to extricate us out of

[t] Pag. 11, 12.

[* Ter. *Phorm.* iv. 4. 15. "Nihil est, *Antipho*, Quin," &c.—D.]

[u] Proposals, parag. 5.

[v] Pag. 7. [See note, p. 505.—D.]

this double labyrinth. I dare say, were our Master's *talents* to be exchanged for Zoïlus's, the labyrinths might continue on, a perpetual puzzle and maze,

——— *Qua signa sequendi*
*Falleret indeprensus et inremeabilis error.**

Our Master, so far from raising the *Vulgate* above the original, is very sure that the author of it has translated the Greek wrong in hundreds of places. But he's as useful to our Master's purpose when he's wrong as when he's right. If he translates παρακαλῶ by *exhortor*, when he should do it by *consolor*, he still shews he read παρακαλῶ in his Greek copy, which is all our Master wants of him.

But our *censor* cannot take one step but ignorance and mistake follow him. Our Master there† tells the Papists, *that more ancient manuscripts are preserved of the Greek than they can shew of the Latin.* This is thus varied by our *censor, that there are FEWER ancient MSS. preserved of the Latin than of the Greek.*ᵛ What our Master says *more ancient*, a comparative, *ancienter, antiquiores*, our *censor* understood *more* in number, *plures antiqui codices.* A thing false, and worthy only of him. Four or five extant copies of the Greek are older than any Latin one yet known; but in the whole, for copies of a thousand years' age, there are twenty Latin ones preserved for one Greek. And now at last we have travelled through dirty roads and dull prospects to

Paragraph the Third.

Our Master had said in this paragraph, *that the exemplar of Origen was the standard to the most learned of the Fathers, and he believed for the most part he had retrieved it.* Upon this, our snarling *censor*, like a dog biting at the stone that's thrown at him, out of his scanty and beggarly common-place,

[* Virg. *Æn.* v. 590.—D.]
[† i.e. in the Sermon on Popery: see p. 247.—D.]
ᵛ Pag. 11.

for a whole page together[x] falls foul on the great Origen. In which attempt, too, he has shewn himself inferior to Homer's Margites, with whose name I at first honoured him. For of the poet's Margites it is said or sung,

Ὃς μὲν ἐπίστατο πολλὰ, κακῶς δ' ἠπίστατο πάντα :*

but of our *censor* we may truly say,

Ὃς μὲν ἐπίστατο παῦρα, κακῶς δ' ἠπίστατο καὶ τά.

The old hero knew many things, but every thing wrong; the modern one knows but few things, and even those wrong. Origen, we grant, was heterodox, and warped the Christian doctrines to the systems of Pagan philosophy. But what's this to his exemplar of the New Testament? which was followed even by those who declaimed most fiercely against his peculiar opinions.

But our *censor* cannot find any high character of Origen's copy *in any author he has yet consulted on this occasion.*[y] Emphatically spoken! 'Twas *on this occasion* only he dipped into these inquiries; and so *without spleen or envy* resolved to search for materials against our Master's Proposals, before he knew what would be the issue of that search;

Et si non aliqua nocuisset, mortuus esset.†

But it seems he had not leisure enough from his drudging office‡ in the cloudy cases of Escobar and Caramuel to search to any purpose.

To help him out at a pinch, I'll supply him with two passages out of the author he would seem most acquainted with, St. Hierom himself: *Comment. on Matthew,* cap. xxiv. *De die autem illa et hora nemo scit, neque angeli cælorum, nisi Pater solus. In quibusdam Latinis codicibus additum est,* Neque Filius; *cum in Græcis et maxime Adamantii et Pierii*

[x] Pag. 13.

[* See note, vol. ii. p. 14 of the present ed. of Bentley's Works.—D.]

[y] Pag. 12. [† Virg. *Ecl.* iii. 15. —"*nocuisses*, mortuus *esses*."—D.]

[‡ See note, p. 513.—D.]

*exemplaribus hoc non habeatur adscriptum.** And on *Galatians*, cap. iii. *O insensati Galatæ, quis vos fascinavit? . . . Legitur in quibusdam codicibus, Quis vos fascinavit NON CREDERE VERITATI? Sed hoc quia in exemplaribus Adamantii non habetur*, omisimus.† Is not this the utmost deference to Origen's copy? *Some copies*, says he, *add μὴ πείθεσθαι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ: but because Origen's copies own not those words, we leave them out.* He declares in another place, that he got a collation from Origen's own original in the library at Cæsarea. And so Euthalius, a learned Greek Father, did, about the same time. What shall we say now to the plodding pupil of Escobar? Either he was very hasty in his *consulting on this occasion;* or else he did not know that Adamantius was Origen, and so in his hunting lost the scent.

But he found something in his hunting (if, instead of a hare, he sprung not a cat), *that St. Hierom says in a letter to St. Austin, that the text* (of the New Testament) *was rather* corrupted *than* mended *by Origen.*[z] This is the letter mentioned here above about the obels and asterisks.[a] St. Hierom, being piqued a little at St. Austin for preferring his old version of *Job* out of Origen's *Hexapla* before his new out of the Hebrew; *Et miror*, says he, *quod LXX. interpretum libros legas, non puros ut ab eis editi sunt, sed ab Origene EMENDATOS sive CORRUPTOS per obelos et asteriscos; et Christiani hominis interpretatiunculam non sequaris:*‡ that is, *I wonder you'll read the Books of the Septuagint, not pure and neat as the LXX. published them, but as they are MENDED or MARRED by Origen with his obels and asterisks; and not read my book, that am a Christian.* Pray observe, *mended or marred;* which refers to the *Hexapla*, where Origen had put marks, obels to denote what was not in the Hebrew, and asterisks to shew what was not in the

[* Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. p. i. p. 118. ed. 1693.—D.]
[† Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. p. i. p. 249. ed. 1693.—D.]
[z] Pag. 13.
[a] Pag. 514 [*i. e.* of the present *Answer*.—D.]
[‡ Hieron. *Opp.* t. iv. p. ii. p. 626. where, "Et miror *quomodo*," &c.—D.]

LXX., but supplied out of Theodotion's version. This interpolation of the LXX. out of Theodotion our learned Father in a little pet calls *mending or marring*, though he himself had translated the LXX. so *marred*. Now, let any man find out how this belongs to the copies of the New Testament, and thence let him judge of Suffenus's judgment, and confess that his intellect is as dark as his countenance.

Our *censor* brings Huetius and Dr. Mill to vouch *that Origen in his writings makes use of several copies of the New Testament*.[b] As if this was any thing to the purpose. Why, for that very reason, he was so useful then to the church, and now to our Master's edition. He may be called the first Christian critic; he gathered from all parts the exemplars of the best note, examined and collated them, and by those helps, as good critics do now, settled the genuine text of Scripture; which was received afterwards by both eastern and western churches as a standard. Had he used but one copy, he had done then no more service than any other Father; and, considering how few of his writings have been preserved, had done less at this day than many other.

Ay, but St. Ambrose tells us, *that Origen's authority was not near so great in the New as in the Old Testament: cum ipse Origenes longe minor sit in Novo, quam in Veteri Testamento*.[c] The meaning is no more than this. St. Ambrose had allegorically interpreted a passage of the New Testament very speciously and plausibly. Whereupon his friend desires him to try the like upon another place proposed. I'll endeavour it, replies the Father, though in the New Testament it's difficult; since even *Origen himself* (that incomparable allegorist) *got less reputation in his essays on the* New Testament *than he had got on the* Old. This is all the matter; and the reason is plain. For in the Old Testament all his allegories referred to the New; but in the New he could refer to nothing but either common notions or visionary schemes of his own. Now, what's this to the Greek Testa-

[b] Pag. 13.

[c] Pag. 20, 21. [Ambr. *Opp.* t. ii. p. 1083. ed. 1686.—D.]

ment? And yet our *censor* filched this passage from Huetius, out of the same page he had just quoted;[d] and, like an ignorant thief, offers it to sale without knowing the value of it.

But our Master pretends *to retrieve the true exemplar of Origen;* and yet our *censor* finds, *upon examining his notes in the* Specimen, *that he gives but three various readings from Origen, and instead of retrieving rejects them all as false.*[e] A spiteful examiner indeed! He has caught our Master, as he thinks, and has him fast in a cleft stick. But here again we have occasion for his *characters requisite, judgment and experience.* Every *reading* that now appears in the edition of any Father is not certainly the reading of that Father. The copyists made as many or more blunders in transcribing the Fathers as in transcribing the Scriptures. Dr. Mill, who meddled with no MSS. but those of the Testament, seems to have thought, at least acts as if he thought, that no other book was faulty but it. Thence, through all his *Prolegomena* he passes his censure upon the copy that each Father used, *these places in it were corrupt:* when all the while it's much more probable the corruption lies not in the Father's copy, but in the copyists of the Father. This is known to our Master in many instances, where the doctor's *corrupt* readings out of a printed Father are corrected by the MSS. of that very Father. Though our Master, therefore, gives these *three* readings out of Origen as they now stand, he has reason to be satisfied they were not the true readings of Origen. If that were all the business, to take the present readings out of Origen's works, and clap them all into the text, even our *censor's* low talents and vicious taste would be sufficient for a new edition.

Our Master had said, *that* 30,000 *various readings now crowd the pages of our best editions, all put upon equal credit, to the offence of many good persons.*[f] Here our pious calumniator first mangles the sentence, and knowingly puts a false

[d] Huetius, pag. 239. [e] Pag. 14.
[f] Parag. 3.

sense upon it, and then cries out, *A piece of grimace, insincerity, imposing on the senses of mankind.*[g] A piece of *grimace* indeed, so habitual to our Timon, that he acts it every day; first wilfully mistakes the words that are said to him, and then bawls and bellows against a phantom of his own making.

Well, in spite of the plainest words, our Master must needs mean, that the *number* of readings *gives the offence:* and then Timon exults, as if he had taken him *in a contradiction to himself and to common sense; for,* says he, *in his* Remarks on the Free-thinkers, *he rallies and exposes as weak and ridiculous, that offence at the great number of various readings.*[h] You see, sir, how some theologues would reward our Master for that piece of service against the *free-thinkers.* But why, forsooth, in contradiction to *common sense?* Had the learned Dr. Whitby, and the greater part of the clergy, that from his alarum took that *offence,* no *common sense* at that time? Did not *atheists* and *sceptics* lay hold on the advantage, to the perverting of many laymen, and to the great terror of the churchmen? If our Master at that time by a seasonable book delivered them from the *panic,* and restored them (as it now seems) to *common sense,* pray let not our Master be now treated as if he alone is *without it.* The short of it is this: number of various readings in the *Holy Scriptures* is not a desirable good, but a necessary evil: in tract of time it was unavoidable, from human nature and circumstances of things. And though our Master is not frightened at that number, or even a greater, and may have recovered others from their fright, yet he believes and is sure, that he that out of that heap of confusion can cull out the genuine readings by a fair touchstone, and restore the text to truth, certainty, and order, will do eminent service, if not to some present party men, yet to posterity and *common Christianity.*

But our censor, having got (as he thought) by his paltry calumny a fair blow at our Master, is now willing to see the

[g] Pag. 14. [h] Pag. 14.

true meaning, *that perhaps it is not the* number *of the readings, but their being all put upon* equal credit, *that gives the offence: the contrary of which,* says he, *is directly and evidently true.*[1] O patience, the queen of virtues! how salutary is thy aid, when one is yoked with such a wretch! But resentment apart; the repute of craziness and madness* is to some men an useful privilege, and covers a multitude of faults. That the readings in Dr. Mill's edition, which accompany the text, are put upon *equal credit,* without rejection or preference, except in some places that make the present points of controversy, is certain and notorious. *But he gives,* says our censor, *in his* Prolegomena *a particular and distinct account of the different* antiquity, authority, *and* correctness *of the several manuscripts: and how can the readings be put upon the same degree of credit, and the copies upon different ones?* Of any other writer, I should be tempted to say, he had never looked into those *Prolegomena;* but of swarthy Timon I dare not affirm it, for his stupidity is so substantial, that though he really read them all over, he may know nothing of the matter.

Dr. Mill, in his xxx. years' *incredible labour,* fancied he had found above two thousand places (as Mr. Markius counts them) where the present text of Stephens ought to be altered. All these he has particularised in his *Prolegomena,* not in order and sequel of book, chapter, and verse, to make them visible, obvious, and easy for use, but has sown them and thrown them about at random, giving every Father, every edition, every manuscript a snack; so that the most recent, most vile and contemptible of all, may have some share in the honour of his genuine readings. Pag. clxiv. he gives the character of a manuscript that it is *chartaceum, manu recenti,* not vellum, *but paper, and of a recent hand;* and yet this worthy one has xi. of his true readings against

[1] Pag. 14.

[* But Colbatch certainly was never "reputed" either crazy or mad: Bentley seems to have grounded this cruel insinuation on the eccentricities of his brother: see p. 533 and note.—D.]

the present text. And so he deals with the rest of them. And if this is not, tell what is, to put all copies upon equal credit? Why impute to a scrub manuscript, which our Master would scorn to look into, the readings that appear in others nine hundred years older? For assure yourself, in that and such other recent copies, not one good reading is found that is not found in the old ones. But the doctor's design was, to distribute his genuine readings so, that every one of his manuscripts might look considerable. And pray, what is his criterion of genuine readings? He has two characteristics to judge by (as any one that will peruse his *Prolegomena* will see), *omissions* and *solecisms*. If a word or words are omitted in any copies, out they must go as interpolations: these make 1500 at least out of his 2000. And what is very extraordinary, the more significancy, the more importance the omitted words have, the more confident he is that they are spurious and interpolated; and for this specious reason, *Quis sanus tam insigne verbum omiserit, præterierit, expunxerit? What copyist* in his wits *would leave out so considerable a word, if he found it in the exemplar that he transcribed?* This argument and expression comes fifty times at least in those *Prolegomena*. One may say, *Quis sanus* could argue at this rate? Is a word, so conducing to the clearness, grace, and beauty of the sentence (as the Dr. often allows), and confirmed by the oldest copies and versions, to be cast out of the text because one drunken or drowsy stationer's boy happened to omit it? God forbid: and yet this is his perpetual manner. The other is *solecism*; which decides the remainder of his genuine readings. If in a few or in one manuscript there's a reading that makes an *ἀνακόλουθον*, an absurdity, a barbarism, he seldom fails to warrant it for true. In short, in his scheme, whatever appears bright and elegant (if one copy does but fail in't) is an emendation of some copyist; whatever appears impolite, idiotic, absurd, (if the most scoundrel copy countenances it) is *manus apostoli*. I am sensible this free dealing of mine will not be grateful to our Master; but his adversaries must

answer for it, who, by their malice and impudence, have made it necessary.

But our censor quarrels with our Master *for his slovenly and suspicious way of quoting manuscripts*, Gallici quatuor, Anglici tres, &c.[j] There's no dealing on the square either with a fool or a knave. In our Master's edition all the manuscripts he uses will be specified, not in the lump, as in Stephens's and Mill's, but before every book of the New Testament. For there are very few good manuscripts that contain the whole; and the neglect of this indication very often makes great mistakes. They will be distinguished by letters, for brevity's sake, A, B, C, &c. a, β, γ, &c. But how could this be done in the *Specimen?* All sensible men perceived this; but dulness leavened with malice allows no favour nor quarter.

Our censor presages, that, *from the proportion of this* Specimen, *the pages of our Master's edition are still like to be crowded with the old round number of* xxx. *thousand variations.*[k] Pray let them be 30,000; and if more, the merrier; provided they subside to the bottom of the pages, and pretend not to rise into the text itself. I'll assure him our Master will not set out a text, and decide against it himself in 2000 places. And so we are arrived at

PARAGRAPH THE FOURTH,

in which our merciful *censor* will not give us much trouble. He first predicts that our Master's edition will fall much below the former ones, and especially Dr. Mill's:[l] and to this, since you know by this time our *censor's* size and abilities, we leave the edition itself to answer.

But he says, *it is certain that our Master does not understand a tittle of any one of the versions he pretends to make use of.*[m] So *certain*, does old *conscience* say? He can make, you see, a good *affidavit* man; and 'twas ungenerous in him to balk his friend Conyers, and leave him under peril of

[j] Pag. 15.
[k] Pag. 15.
[l] Pag. 15.
[m] Pag. 16.

the pillory.* I would ask dear *misanthrope* a couple of short questions. Has not he read Mill's *Prolegomena*, where the doctor fairly professes he knew nothing of the Oriental tongues, nor Gothic, nor Saxon, but made use in the two last of his friend Dr. Marshall, and in the others of the Latin translations in the *Polyglot* Bible? Whence is it then that Dr. Mill with these defects has merited the character of *incredible pains and industry*, and our Master under the same defects can have no grain of allowance? But how knows the veracious Timon what he affirms to be so *certain?* I have had the honour to see a sort of *hexapla*, a thick volume in quarto, made and writ by our Master with his own hand before he was XXIV. years old; in the first column of which is every word of the Hebrew Bible alphabetical; in five other columns all the various interpretations of those words in the Chaldee, Syriac, Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, and Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, that occur in the whole Bible. This he made for his private use, to know the Hebrew, not from the late Rabbins, but the ancient versions; when, bating Arabic, Persic, Ethiopic, he read over the whole *Polyglot*. And I saw, too, another volume in quarto, of various lections and emendations of the Hebrew text, drawn out of these ancient versions, which, though done in those green years, would make a second part to the famous Cappellus's *Critica Sacra*. In

PARAGRAPH THE FIFTH

our *censor* assures us, with the same confidence, *that our Master's whole life has been spent in critical niceties and observations on classic authors.*[n] The fitter, for that, as I think, to give an edition of the Greek Testament. The

[* See note, p. 499.—"But though he *flies to the law* himself, as an *injured, libelled* person, yet he makes no scruple, we see, *to libel me and others too* as much as he pleases; and, with a modesty peculiar to himself, *prejudges the very cause* now depending, and *condemns me even to the pillory.*" Middleton's *Farther Remarks*, &c. p. 3.—D.]

[n] Pag. 16.

world has seen what poor work is made in this kind by mere theologues without classical letters. But how came Timon to forget that our Master, while he was only *deacon*, had the honour to be the first preacher of Mr. Boyle's lecture; and gave the world a volume of sermons that have been translated abroad into several languages? Do those consist of nothing but *critical niceties?* But this is the venom of such vermin as our Timon. If a man is distinguished in one part of learning, he's not allowed to know any thing else; for why, say they, does he not publish that too? By this rule, what must Timon's life and studies be supposed to have been spent in? In libelling and defaming. For as soon as he came from Portugal (where he stayed not long, but much longer than the Factory wished), he libelled that court and country too,* with such paltry stuff as Dr. Edwards told him in print was below any *kitchen wench*. Since that time the world has seen nothing of his but libels and pamphlets to the same tune; one of which appears in his own name, but most lie under the cover of the musical† Conyers.

Our Master has declared in this paragraph, *that he'll not alter one letter in the text without the authorities subjoined in the notes*. This must not pass without a fling; for Timon says, *that the Dutch* orator *and our Master's* old friend *Peter Burman, whom he has quoted in the title-page, has told us already what we are to expect:* the substance of which is, *that a* critic *long used to cut and slash* profane *writings will hardly keep his cruel fingers from the* Scripture *itself.*° I thank our dear English *casuist*‡ for quoting the Dutch *orator*. Here's an instance of his stupor and insensibility beyond any of the famous Tom Coryat. Mr. Burman's oration, made last year, when he laid down his office of *rector magnificus*, a very fine one in its way, is all writ in Lucian's manner, a thorough *irony* and jeer. He tells the audience, that to make a complete finished *divine* there's no need of

[* Colbatch, who had been for several years chaplain to the Factory at Lisbon, published an *Account of the Court of Portugal*, &c. 8vo, 1700.—D.]

[† A sneer at Middleton's love of music.—D.]

° Pag. 17.

[‡ See note, p. 513.—D.]

any skill at all, either in *languages*, or *history*, or *eloquence*, or *critic*. These four topics he agreeably pursues; and in the last of them has that passage which our Escobar has chosen for his *motto*.* The Dutch *orator* supposed that all men of common sense would read his meaning backwards; but he met with an English *cabbage-head* that takes him to be in good earnest; as being indeed of that opinion before, and believing himself a profound *theologue* without any of those *four ill qualities*.

We have one feeble fling more, and this paragraph is done. Our Master, he says, *has made some* literal *alterations in the Greek text, and one* verbal *one in the Latin, without authority subjoined*.[p] The reason of those *literal* alterations could not be made appear in this short *Specimen*, but will be given in the edition itself; and the *verbal* one, *erit* for *erunt* (though our Master has yet no manuscript for it), is founded upon such plain and cogent reason as is equal to authority.

Paragraph the Sixth.

Even Timon's dulness is sunk in this paragraph below its natural depression, and he seems to be jaded with his past laborious fatigue. Here were plausible *topics* ready for him, *emendations* and *mere conjectures, not supported by any copies now extant; of no sect nor party; no regard to any disputed points*. How comes the zealous and orthodox Timon to be mute where he should have been loudest? Instead of which he contents himself to aim at an awkward ridicule upon κειμήλιον and *magna charta*.

But he thinks he is very sharp upon the word *extinguished*. What, says he, shall our Master's edition *needs last when all the* ancient manuscripts *are not only* lost, *but* (*in a phrase as barbarous as the thought*) extinguished *too*?[q] Is not this smart and pungent? But a fool never shews himself more than when he affects and labours to be witty. He first leaves out the words, *here quoted*; and by that slight of hand, for a few MSS. of the *New Testament* he substitutes

[* See p. 480.—D.] [p] Pag. 17. [q] Pag. 17.

all the MSS. of all books whatever. But pray, is that a wonder, if an edition, dispersed over Europe in a thousand exemplars, should outlast half a score manuscripts, half perished already, and their letters scarce legible but vanishing with long age? And is it so *barbarous* to suppose that MSS. may be *extinguished?* What became of the famous library of Alexandria, when there were no other books but MSS.? was it not *extinguished,* and all destroyed in a sedition of that city? Were not all the MSS. of the then famous library at Ghent destroyed on purpose by the Anabaptists of those times? Whence have we the famous MS. of the *Gospels* and *Acts,* that Beza gave to our University? Was it not from Lyons in France, when in the civil wars the monasteries and libraries in that city were all burnt or plundered, and this book chanced to fall into a learned man's hands? Did the Turks *extinguish* no *manuscripts* when they spread their empire over Greece? What has formerly been may be again; and our Master's *thought* is not so *barbarous* as our *censor's* cavil is ignorant and silly.

Paragraphs the Seventh and Eighth.

In these our Master proposes to print the book by *subscription;* and without that indeed, what sense, what use in PROPOSALS? But our *censor,* as if *subscriptions* had never been known in Great Britain before, falls into one of his raving fits: *gain and filthy lucre; sordid insinuations; higgling to squeeze our money from us; mendicants in the streets; charitable contribution to a poor young critic; scheme and bubble borrowed from Change-Alley;* and other such wild reveries.[r] Now, besides the influence of the moon, there

[r] Pag. 18, pag. 19. ["In a design like this, pretended to be undertaken for the *service of the Christian world,* any other man would have contrived as well as he could to have kept out of sight all *selfish views and motives,* all regards to *gain and filthy lucre:* but we find in these two paragraphs such *sordid insinuations,* such low and paltry *higgling* to *squeeze our money* from us, viz. *great expense requisite; shall be put to the press as soon as money is contributed; no more printed than subscribed for; the best letter, paper, and ink in Europe; the lowest price must be,* &c., that it puts me in mind of those *mendicants* in the streets, who beg our charity with an *half-sheet of Proposals* pinned upon their breasts: to what

seem to me to be two causes of this sudden extravagance; one, the strong idea he took of *his money being squeezed from him.* For you are to know, to a great many other virtues he had before, old Timon has of late added a new one, the most tenacious and sordid avarice; and renews among us the memory of old Rashleigh.* So that he has now a whole set of most amiable qualities:

——— *æstuat ingens*
Uno in corde odium, *mixtoque* insania fastu,
Et furiis agitatus amor sceleratus habendi.†

The other cause was *personal spleen and envy*;[s] though, with his usual *conscience,* he professes the contrary. At the first

purpose is it to tell us that Mr. John Walker is to go halves with him in the *gain or loss* of this work, except to move the compassion of *good Christian people*, and to beg of us, however unkind we may be to himself, yet not to see a *poor young critic* undone for want of charitable contributions? But indeed most people are agreed in opinion, that he has borrowed his scheme from *Change-Alley*, and in this age of *bubbles* took the hint to set up *one of his own:*" &c. &c.—D.]

[* In *The Present State of Trinity College in Cambridge, in a Letter from Dr. Bentley, Master of the said College, to the Right Reverend John, Lord Bishop of Ely*, &c. 8vo, 1710, Rashleigh is thus described: "Now a senior fellow, who when your lordship inquires his character, will be found a sordid miser and every way worthless; is never without a curse in his mouth; keeps company with the very bedmakers and sculls; lets his own chamber out at rent, and lies skulking without one; has absented from chapel for some years on all Sundays and festivals, because he will not be at charge for surplice and hood," p. 26. Against this attack Rashleigh is defended in several pamphlets which were called forth by the piece just quoted: in one by Miller, entitled *Some Remarks upon a Letter, &c.* 8vo, 1710, we are told, that as to "his not having a surplice and hood, being asked whether it was true, he answered, he might have borrowed the Master's, for he never used it himself," p. 74.—D.]

[† Virg. *Æn.* xii. 666.

. . . "æstuat ingens
Uno in corde *pudor*, mixtoque insania *luctu*,
Et furiis agitatus amor, *et conscia virtus.*"—D.]

[s Pag. 1. ["I shall not trouble myself with making any apology for the following *Remarks;* but shall only desire the reader to believe, that (whatever prejudices may lie against them) they were not drawn from me by *personal spleen* or *envy* to the author of the Proposals, but by a *serious conviction* that he has neither talents nor materials proper for the work he has undertaken, and that *religion* is much more likely to receive detriment than service from it," &c. —D.]

view of the *Specimen*, he pronounced it was a *sham*; no such thing *designed*, no such thing *possible*: but when he heard that the Proposals met with great encouragement from the best quality at London, notwithstanding the difficulty of the times, he raged, he stormed, he resolved to take his deadly pen in hand, and extirpate the edition from the very root. And, in truth, all his friends (if he has any) should come in to his assistance; for if the edition goes prosperously on, old Timon's either a dead man, or in a dark room. Both his constitution and his schemes have long looked towards that latter place. He has a brother* here in the neighbourhood, a harmless, quiet clergyman, and much the better of the two; who has taken a fancy from a vow or a vision, to wear in the flower of his age a beard to his girdle, sufficient for a Greek patriarch. And though ours has the much better title to that badge upon his chin, yet out of true *fraternum odium* (for they cannot so much as see each other) he refuses to wear that *hieroglyphic*, because the other has taken it up first. However, he seems to be under

[* See note, p. 525.—According to Dr. Monk, *Life of B.* vol. ii. p. 136, this person was the Rev. *George* Colbatch; and in *Cantabrig. Graduati* we find "Colbatch, *Geo.*, Christ's, A. B. 1691." The following notice by Cole, in which he is called *Thomas*, has never been printed. "Thomas Colbatch was vicar of both the Abingtons in 1695. He was a very worthy, conscientious, good man, but somewhat particular. He dreamed that an angel appeared to him, and ordered him to let his beard grow; and from that time he never shaved. I remember him in his white hair and beard, a thin old man, at my mother's funeral, which he attended to St. Clement's Church in Cambridge, where she desired to be buried. He was brother to the late Rev. Dr. Colbatch, rector of Orwell, and senior fellow of Trinity College, who died this year 1748, and lies buried at Orwell. Our vicar left an only daughter, who lived with Dr. Colbatch after the death of her father, and is heiress from her uncle of 10,000 pds. Mr. Colbatch got a fall from his horse on Gogmagog Hills, in his way to Cambridge, and broke his leg, which occasioned his death. He printed an Exposition of the Catechism, which is in few people's hands but of those to whom he presented it; and indeed that was the end he proposed in publishing of it. He died March 14, 1735, aged 75 years, and lies buried, according to his direction, under a neat altar-tomb on the S. side of chancel in the churchyard of Little Abington; for he was of opinion that it was not proper to inter in churches, as is evident from a note of his in the parish register." *MS. Collections* (in the Brit. Museum), vol. xxii. p. 257.—D.]

a vow too, not to speak one word of truth or sense till he has *demolished our Master*. This great design lies *upon his heart*, he says; and, in all probability, may hold him tug so long, that he'll die before he finishes it. For he finds his party dwindle; he walks melancholy and lonely,

*Ipse suum cor edens, hominum vestigia vitans;**

he stoops already, and decays apace, and lies sleepless whole nights, out of mere anguish to see all things quiet and flourishing about him. In time of yore he had now and then some consolation, some squabble in the college to keep up his spirits; on which occasions he would look something gay among us, *smile horrible*, like Satan in Milton, and extend his wide jaws with an agreeable yawn. But now every thing about him, peace, plenty, and a hopeful prospect of the future, conspire to his uneasiness: and if this edition, too, comes on the back of them, poor Timon is quite heart-broken. But our *censor* having despatched his remarks upon all the paragraphs of the *Proposals*, he now advances to make his observations upon the

SPECIMEN.

And here he first takes a view, with great satisfaction and applause to himself, of what he has already done: he has shewn, *that our Master, even upon his own scheme, cannot give us any thing, or any at least considerable, any thing equal to the pomp and magnificence of his* Proposals: all is to be *copied and transcribed*, and *robbed and stolen from Dr. Mill.*[t] Can one yet bear with patience this Suffenus? But we'll let him go off without any farther drubbing:

Quamquam est scelestus, non committet, hodie umquam iterum ut vapulet.†

[* Cicero (from Hom. *Il.* vi. 202), *Tuscul.* iii. 26.—D.]

[t Pag. 23. [Middleton's language here is not quite so strong: "—yet with all his *hints and conjectures*, his old *manuscripts* and *versions*, he has not been able to produce *one single reading* which we do not find long ago exhibited in Dr. Mill's edition," &c.: afterwards, p. 24. "he will be found, I am apt to think, at last to have acted *the plagiary* rather than the *critic*."—D.]

[† Ter. *Adelph.* ii. 1. 5.—D.]

Our Master's design and proposal in this edition is to give an accurate and authentic Greek TEXT; and in the *Specimen* here offered there are more than *threescore* changes in it in the compass of xxi. verses. And I have had the opportunity to hear one of the best judges in England say, after he had carefully read it over, that of those lx. changes in the text there was not one but what should be there; as every knowing man would allow. Now if their numbers in the whole New Testament bear equal proportion to this pattern, will that be *inconsiderable?* will that be *nothing?* In truth, if our Master's *edition* goes on at this rate through the whole, the alterations will appear too many, and at first put us into some fright. And I dare say our Master is better pleased when he finds the present text right, than when it's wrong.

But because Dr. Mill is cast in our teeth so often by our *censor*, I'll examine and compare (though it's dry work for a letter) what the doctor and our Master have each done upon the text of this chapter. In his *Prolegomena* the doctor has given all his desired reformations of the text; and in this xxii. of the *Apocalypse* he would introduce verse iii. *κατάθεμα*, verse ix. *dele γὰρ*, verse xvii. *dele καὶ*, verse xx. *dele καὶ*. These four are all that even malice itself can say were borrowed from him by our Master in all the *threescore*. But let candour look on our Master's notes on each, and speak whether those four changes would not have been made though the doctor's edition had never existed. *Three* places our Master has changed which the doctor would have stand as they now are. Verse v. *χρείαν φωτὸς λύχνου*: our Master added *φωτὸς*, out of the best MS., all the old versions, and commentators: but the doctor likes it not; upon his general topic to approve all *omissions*. Verse xvi. he decides for *ὀρθρινὸς*, when all the MSS., old and new, have *πρώϊνος*, as our Master puts it. Verse xix. *ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς*, *de ligno vitæ*. Dr. Mill would have it as it now is, *βίβλου* and *libro*, against all the MSS. of both languages, against both authority and reason. For the *tree*

of life here is joined with the *holy city*, as it is in verses ii. and xiv. of this chapter, to which two places this plainly refers; but the *book of life*, mentioned in the iii. xiii. and xx. chapters, and from thence foisted into this text, is never joined with the *city*. In these *three* places, we see, the two editors differ in opinion; and let those that are qualified determine the point. But in verse x. the doctor would eject out of the text λέγει μοι: to which place our Master has said nothing. And why, forsooth, must λέγει μοι be banished; which all the Greek copies, the Syriac, Coptic, and Latin versions espouse so unanimously? Why, on the sole credit of the Æthiopic: that version which the doctor himself says is in St. Paul's *Epistles immanis a litera textus aberratio*, and in the very *Apocalypse, non multo melior*. One version alone, therefore, of so mean a character as himself gives of it, shall over-balance all other versions and copies too, when it votes for an *omission*, the doctor's peculiar foible. The sum of this is; our Master steals *all* out of Dr. Mill, because in above LX. alterations the doctor agrees with him in *four*, dissents from him in *three*, starts *one* contemned by our Master, who has LII. yet remaining proper to himself.

Of each of which LII. our *censor will not examine the merit; but will take notice of one, as a taste of our Master's great* sagacity *and* judgment.[u] And I dare say he'll give us a nauseous *taste* of his own *arrogance* and *pedantry*. Verse ii. our Master has placed in the text ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐκεῖθεν; where before it was ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν: the former is *hinc et inde*, the latter *hinc et hinc*; the sense of either not differing in a tittle. But our Master was governed here by *authority*: the Alexandrine has ἐκεῖθεν; and there's not one Greek book in the world, that has this chapter in it, that comes within 600 years of the age of that MS.; the majority too of the recenter copies (for there are few at all of the *Apocalypse*) declare for ἐκεῖθεν; and so the commentator Arethas, about the IV. or V. century. The Syriac version too reads ἐκεῖθεν; for it changes the latter word; says not

[u] Pag. 23.

men horco umen horco, but *men horco umen lehal.* And yet here our supercilious pedant makes a flourish with three Hebrew particles, which, stript of their garb, are no more than *mizzeh umizzeh, mippo umippo, hennah vahennah.* Well, what's the argument from this? Why, because the Hebrew doubles the same word in these phrases, *it's not possible to imagine*[v] but St. John would double the same word in his Greek. *Not possible,* says Escobar, our nice splitter of cases? How was it possible then for St. Hierom? who, in his close version from the Hebrew, translates *mippo umippo,* &c. ten times *hinc et inde* for once *hinc et hinc;* as any one will see that examines the passages.

Our *censor* now proceeds to wind up his bottoms. The *order of words* (which at first was *an absurd impossible notion, a silly fancy* of our Master's)[w] is now, it seems, grown something real; but *no new observation or discovery of his; all other editors have constantly observed and applied it; even St. Austin calls this version* verborum tenacior cum perspicuitate sententiæ.[x] What can one say now to this crazy adversary, that kicks down at once all he had laboured before, that contradicts one falsehood of his own with another as big? The half of his pamphlet is spent to prove the order of words a mere *whim.* The close of it avers it *true,* to be an old observation, applied by all former editors. Now, which of the two is the greater bounce, may be a proper exercise for our *casuist's* sagacity. As the first has been thoroughly refuted already, the other is visible and palpable by its own lumpiness. Take all the Greek and Latin Testaments from the beginning of printing. As the order stood in the first impressions, it has continued ever since. Not Erasmus, not Stephens, not the Lovanienses, not the two Popes, not Curcellæus, not Fell, not Mill, take any notice in their collation of *manuscripts* of the *order of the words.* If the words were but there, they thought the order of them was a mere indifferency; and yet spite and ignorance vouches that it was *observed and applied by them all.* Neither

[v] Pag. 24. [w] Pag. 10. [x] Pag. 24.

is he more veracious when he says, Austin says of *THIS version, that it keeps close to the words with clearness of the sense.* St. Austin does not speak there of *this* version, but *another:* as the passage is now read, he speaks of the *old Italic;* but when our Master's edition appears, it will shew how much that place has been mistaken.*

Our *censor* at last concludes, *that our Master possibly may have met with some* few MSS. *that Dr. Mill had not used;* but *that a* few insignificant readings *are not worth such a pother:* he advises him rather *to reprint Dr. Mill's, as Kuster did, than pretend to a* new original *of his own:* he predicts *he will be found to be a* plagiary, *and no* critic: he pronounces, *that so much* vanity, pedantry, blunder, *and* self-contradiction, *were never found before in one sheet as in the* Proposals:[y] and so the mountebank courteously quits the stage, and bids the audience adieu.

And now, sir, I have fully obeyed your commands, signified in your letter; and though you have not the *name* of the pamphleteer, yet you have him described in the truest lines and colours. And of the *merits* of his performance I now make yourself the judge. Did you ever see such rancour, such implacable malice, as the author has shewn against our and his own Master? Did you ever see such haughty sufficiency, accompanied with such gross stupidity? Has he succeeded in one single point? Is not every single citation either misunderstood or misapplied? Are not all his cavils, all his sarcasms, repelled and retorted on him? Let other scribblers and garreteers take some caution from his example. If they will needs attack an *edition* before it's begun, let them put their *names* to their work. If they do not, they *shall have* no answer; and if they do, they *will need* none.

I am, honoured sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Trinity College,
Dec. xxxi. 1720.

J. E.†

[* See note, p. 508.—D.]

[† See p. 481 and note.—D.]

[y] Pag. 24.

ORATIUNCULA.

(Suis Terentii editionibus a Bentleio præmissa.)

RICHARDI BENTLEII,

CUM SEPTEM IN THEOLOGIA DOCTORES CREARET,

ORATIUNCULA;

CANTABRIGIÆ IN COMITIIS HABITA,

JULII VI. MDCCXXV.

D^nus^ Procurator: VENERANDE PATER, AD CREATIONEM.

AD creationem vocas? Ego vero, dignissime Procurator, volens obtempero; eo minus gravate hoc creandi munus obiturus, quod tot et tales hos filios meos almæ matri Academiæ sisto. Nam superioribus quidem temporibus, prope summa votorum decessori meo erat, ut singulis apud vos annis jus trium liberorum obtinere posset: mihi vero felicitas illa perpetua obtingit, ut septem pluribusve liberis quotannis fiam auctior.

Unde vero et qui factum est, ut antiqua parens nostra, quam non ita pridem quasi senio defectam et effœtam mœrentes adspeximus, jam vetere sua fecunditate denuo revirescat? Quid tandem est, quod hanc nobis alumnorum frequentiam, hanc matri nostræ vim et juventam redintegrat? quod non modo tironum catervas insolita multitudine huc allicit, sed et veteranos nostros accendit ad amplissimam apud nos dignitatem capessendam?

Enimvero, academici, sapientissimi regis GEORGII, clementiæ quidem et bonitati erga omnes, voluntati vero in vos et munificentiæ singulari totum hoc acceptum refertur. ILLE

hujus quicquid et quantumcumque est, auctor, inceptor, perfector: ILLE pridem bibliothecam vestram infinita librorum copia linguisque emortuis locupletavit; nunc autem, quod unum vobis defuit, ad viventium spirantiumque linguarum studia certissima præmiorum spe adolescentes invitat: ILLE et devictis perduellibus veniam, et capite damnatis vitam, et extorribus patriam, et rerum omnium egenis patrimonia concessit: ILLE omnem discordiarum et delictorum memoriam, perpetuo edicto sepultam, oblivione delevit: ILLE et foris potentiæ gloriæque Britannorum, et domi opulentiæ securitatique prospicit.

Quoque magis hæc nobis bona perpetua propriaque fore speremus, ILLE etiam FILIUM imperio largitur, olim et matura ætate sibi successurum, solique jam nunc patri secundum; innato sibi honesto Britannis amabilem, nostræque invicem gentis amantissimum; vigorem animi in vultu atque oculis, civilitatem non fictam in toto habitu gestuque præferentem.

Neque filium modo rex beatissimus, sed et NURUM, omnibus animi ingeniique dotibus instructam; quodque in illo fastigio rarissimum est, nulla non doctrina excultam; quæ, quod ex animo Deum colat, etiam ministros ejus et sacerdotes honore prosequitur; quam, quicquid agit, quodcumque loquitur, quoquo incedit, decor et suadela majestasque comitantur.

ILLE denique, quo non præsenti modo ætati sed et venienti consultum, NEPOTES quoque NEPTESque Britanniæ impertit; mirificæ omnes lætissimæque indolis; quos ipse Genius, quas ipsæ Gratiæ, ad summa omnia quasi manibus finxisse ac formavisse videantur.

Hoc liberorum virtutumque comitatu cinctus rex augustissimus, quid mirum si matri nostræ Academiæ felicia tempora candidosque soles restituit? Jam pax et otium et honos; jam ingenuæ juvenum artes, ac fortiora demum et virilia studia, domicilium hoc sibi olim notum et assuetum revisunt. His auspiciis reverendi hi viri, hac blanda tempestate inducti,

jam spretis inferioribus subselliis ad supremum in theologia gradum strenue enituntur.

Vos vero, filii dilectissimi, macti ista virtute atque ingenio estote. Vos Academia lubens in hunc doctorum ordinem cooptat; ac purpuratorum suorum decus renasci sibi et reflorescere læta contemplatur. Quæ vero vobis bona dividat mater amantissima? quibusve demum muneribus suos filios prosequatur? Non certe pecunia, non reditibus et fundis: hos vosmet a rege optimo, hos ab optimatibus, hos a præsulibus, vestro merito quandoque consequemini. Ipsa, quod probe scitis, in rebus istis paupercula est. Quod vero habet, melius id profecto ac majus, jamdudum vobis dedit et insevit; bonam mentem, eloquentiam, doctrinam, humanitatem. Ne tamen vos et hodie prorsus indonatos dimittat, his suis insignibus de more veteri deductis cohonestat; quæ vos non pretio quasi venalia, sed suo pondere et ex prisca dignitate metiemini.

Ac primo quidem vos *pileo* donat, libertatis quondam symbolo; quo vos, opinor, hunc gradum semel assecutos, post ab omnibus apud se scholasticis exercitiis liberos et immunes constituit. Nec tamen vos deinceps otiosos ac desides fore arbitratur. Quippe, ut olim qui nudo capite domi ac in urbe versabantur, ad iter tamen accincti pileo sibi caput aut petaso vel galero muniebant; ita vos hoc suo pignore commonitos esse cupit, ut jam pileo instructi, continuo magis arduum iter ac laboriosum inceptetis. Non jam amplius vobis, in hac umbra scholarum, sed in sole ac pulvere, in vera justaque acie sub dio est militandum: jam cum hostibus ecclesiæ undecumque incursantibus, qua concionibus habendis, qua libris edendis, acerrime confligendum. Quin et illud vobis inculcat; sicut in nummis veteribus Ulixei et Mercurii ac Vulcani effigies, pileatæ plerumque vel petasatæ spectantur, ita vos in sermonibus scriptisque vestris et Ulixei facundiam, et Mercurii acumen, et Vulcani artificem operam exprimere oportere.*

Sed et altero vos dono beat mater Academia, potiore

* Hic singulis pileus imponitur.

cunctis Persarum Arabumve divitiis. Videtis hunc *Codicem Sacrum*, melioris vitæ ducem et magistrum, immortalitatis obsidem, salutis sponsorem. Hoc vos libro impertit, et primo quidem *clauso;* quo velut signo vobis indicat, arcana Dei mysteria cunctosque sapientiæ thesauros hic haberi reconditos, non illotis, quod aiunt, manibus tractandos, non indocto cuivis et profano temere committendos.* Vobis vero, quos cum eruditione, tum moribus agnoscit idoneos, etiam *apertum* concredit; unde et vobismet ipsi lucidum veri fontem vivosque latices hauriatis, et auditorum vestrorum animos puro ac salubri rore cælestis doctrinæ irrigetis.†

Neque vero vel hic clauditur munificæ matris liberalitas. Nam et *anulo* vos dignatur, et eo quidem *aureo;* tam libertatis jam vestræ quam auctoritatis indicio. Quippe ut olim jus anuli aurei senatoribus primum solis, mox autem et equitibus, postremo (labante publica disciplina) cuivis ingenuo liberove, numquam vero servis concessum est; ita vos hodie suo mater hoc pignore, si minus in senatoriam dignitatem (hanc solius regis beneficio suo quisque tempore nanciscamini) at in ingenuitatem certe libertatemque asserit. Jam manum ferulæ subducitis; jam magistrorum dictata tuto negligitis; non diutius vestrum est, stantes discere, sed ex cathedra docere. Quin et aliis nominibus hoc suum munusculum ornat et commendat. Hic vobis anulus more veteri *natalitius* habeatur; hodie enim doctores nascimini. Hic dies vobis deinceps quasi natalis numerabitur; tanto illi alteri honore anteponendus, quanto majus est doctores, quam infantes nasci. Porro idem hic anulus etiam *pronubus* vobis esto. Quippe hoc velut arrabone, jam mater Academia filiarum suarum natu maximam Theologiam in matrimonium vobis collocat; quam sive dote exigua, seu (quod auguror atque opto) luculente dotatam inveneritis, numquam cum illa facietis divortium, uxorem eam vobis, matronam, dominam, caste semper et honorifice habebitis. Quin et ipse ego, more majorum, cum anulum meum vobis trado, *here-*

* Hic singulis clausus datur liber.

† Hic apertus.

dem hujus cathedræ meæ de vobis aliquem, si non dedignamini, libens instituo.*

Sed quid ego de me, tamquam olim de vobis quempiam heredem *cathedræ* relicturo? Ipsa mater Academia jubet et instituit, ut jam nunc in ista sede vos singulos collocem. Videtis, ut prima specie adblandiatur? ut sessorem callide subdoleque invitet? mollicula pluma tumens, et opere textili superbiens. Ea vero, si expertis creditis, quovis scamno durior est ac molestior, quovis stadio et curriculo exercitatior. Atque hoc vos symbolo mater admonet, ne nunc, quasi studiis omnibus curisque defuncti, *cessatum* aliquo vel *sessitatum* abeatis; sed ut quam primum in hac sella paulisper consederitis, ad labores novos experiendos alacriores surgatis: atque eo quidem omine, ut tandem aliquando vel hanc ipsam, me decedente, cathedram occupetis; vel, quod lautius est et optabilius, decanalem aliquam aut episcopalem; vel, si ne hic quidem consistitis, archiepiscopalem denique, jam non cathedram sed thronum, ascendatis.†

Numquid aliud est quod restat, an jam valere vobis dictura est Academia? Immo vero, quo nulla non gratia suos filios demereatur, etiam *osculo* vos per me excipit; non suavio quod voluptatis est, sed osculo quod religionis; osculo caritatis, osculo sancto, osculo in Domino Jesu: quale prisco ecclesiæ ritu, cum super Cenam Dominicam, tum die Paschatis festo, tum in ordinationibus sacris, pie olim et pudice dabatur ac reddebatur. Hoc vobis osculo bona mater *impetratæ veniæ* fidem facit, siquid olim in statuta sua juniores et rerum imperiti forte peccavistis. Hoc itidem osculum *benevolentiæ* suæ pignus, hoc et *cognationis* tesseram vobiscum auferetis; ut, ubicumque terrarum gentiumve fueritis, hanc matrem vestram semper caram, semper honoratam habeatis; et ab ipsa vicissim, quandocumque in rem vestram fuerit, consilium, auxilium jure vestro efflagitetis.‡

* Hic minimo singulorum digito anulus imponitur.
† Hic singuli in cathedra collocantur.
‡ Hic singuli osculo excipiuntur.

Jamque, nisi animi fallor, viri academici, rite facta ac transacta sunt omnia. Vos vero, filii carissimi, sollemnibus jam verbis compello, et *auctoritate mihi commissa, creo, saluto, pronuntio vos omnes, Professores, Doctores in Sacra Theologia.*

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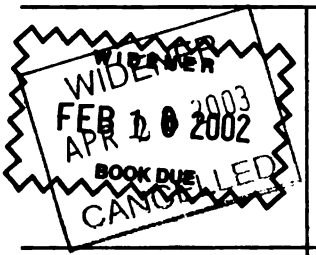

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